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TRANSLATED BY

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Dr. G.P. BHATT

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[PURĀṆAS IN TRANSLATION]

VOLUMES

ŚIVA 1-4
LIṄGA 5-6
BHĀGAVATA 7-11
GARUḌA 12-14
NĀRADA 15-19
KŪRMA 20-21
BRAHMĀṆḌA 22-26
AGNI 27-30
VARĀHA 31-32
BRAHMA 33-36
VĀYU 37-38
PADMA 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44

VOLUMES UNDER PREPARATION

BHAVIṢYA
BRAHMAVAIVARTA
DEVĪBHĀGAVATA
KĀLIKĀ
MĀRKAṆḌEYA
MATSYA
PADMA, PARTS VII-X
SKANDA
VĀMANA
VIṢṆU
VIṢṆUDHARMOTTARA

THE

PADMA-PURĀṆA

PART VI

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY

Dr. N.A. DESHPANDE

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The purest gems lie hidden in the bottom of the ocean or in the depth of rocks. One has to dive into the ocean or delve into the rocks to find them out. Similarly, truth lies concealed in the language which with the passage of time has become obsolete. Man has to learn that language before he discovers that truth.

But he has neither the means nor the leisure to embark on that course. We have, therefore, planned to help him acquire knowledge by an easier course. We have started the series of Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology in English Translation. Our goal is to universalize knowledge through the most popular international medium of expression. The publication of the Purāṇas in English Translation is a step towards that goal.

PREFACE

This forty-fourth volume in the series of *Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* comprises the sixth part of the Padma-Purāṇa containing the remaining chapters (68-117) of the fifth section of the Purāṇa, viz. *Pātālakhaṇḍa.*

Like the foregoing parts this part also contains a number of interesting topics and a good variety of fascinating stories and anecdotes characterized by fine dramatic qualities and poetical fancy and flavour. The most dominating themes are the worship of god Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu and the importance of the month of Vaiśākha for Viṣṇu worship, and the worship of Śiva and his Phallus, and the efficacy of sacred ash therein. Some striking observations of the Purāṇa in this part are noted here.

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Being and the three gods of the Trinity are equal to a croreth of a croreth (i.e. insignificant) part of his feet.

The purification of Viṣṇu's devotees is accomplished in twelve ways, viz. purification of the feet by going round the idol with devotion etc., purification of the hands by taking leaves and flowers etc. for his worship, purification of speech by describing his virtues etc., that of ears and eyes by listening to stories of Kṛṣṇa, witnessing his festival etc., and of the head, of the heart, of the nose and so on in ways described in ch. 78.

Worship of Kṛṣṇa is of five kinds, viz. *Abhigamana*, *Upādāna*, *Yoga*, *Svādhyāya* and *Ijyā* as explained in ch. 78.

Thirty-two offences against Viṣṇu such as going to the Lord's temple in vehicles, drinking spirituous liquor etc. are described in ch. 79.

Five sacred rites are prescribed for a devotee of Viṣṇu, such as marking the body with a mark of conch etc.

While the first three castes should worship in the manner laid down in the scriptures, women and śūdras who are exempted from this should propitiate Viṣṇu by uttering his name.

In addition to the common flowers used in worship to please

Viṣṇu eight internal flowers are described in ch. 84, such as harmlessness, control of senses etc. A few external flowers are also mentioned.

Devotion is said to be of various kinds in ch. 85, viz. (1) mental, (2) of speech, and (3) of body; and again (1) secular, (2) Vedic, and (3) spiritual.

The name of Gaṅgā is said to be very efficacious in destroying sins. If a man at a distance of thousands of yojanas remembers Gaṅgā, he, even though a sinner, obtains the highest position.

Five kinds of sons are described in chapters 87-88.

In ch. 90 beauty, good character, truthfulness, nobleness, religious merit, sweetness, internal and external purity, devotion to husband, service to him, patience and affection have been called the eleven ornaments of a woman.

In ch. 94 it is said that there is no other worthy recipient than Brāhmaṇas; there is no god higher than Viṣṇu; no holy place like Gaṅgā; no prayer like Gāyatrī, no vow like that of Dvādaśī, no friend like wife; no virtue like compassion; no happiness like freedom; no āśrama like that of a householder; no better conduct than truthfulness; no greater pleasure than contentment; and no better month than Vaiśākha.

In ch. 96 among those who go to hell are included those who look upon Brahmā, Śaṅkara and Viṣṇu as different from one another, those who cause obstruction when wealth is being given to Brāhmaṇas, who are sceptic and atheists, who torment their wives, who feed their own belly, are gluttons, break a family, cut off the bond of love and who test the Brāhmaṇas. Of all pious acts giving gifts alone is considered the greatest and no gift is said to be equal to that of food, water or a cow.

In ch. 98 it is said that there is an expiation for a very great sinner, a rogue or a malevolent one but there is no expiation for an ungrateful person.

In ch. 105 the application of bhasma (sacred ash) on various parts of the body is praised as most efficacious in destroying the sins committed by those parts, and besmearing the forehead with ash is said to destroy the writing of Yama as fire destroys a writing on a tablet.

In ch. 114 it is said that in Kṛtayuga meditation alone is the best, in Tretā sacrifice is the best, in Dvāpara worship is the

best, while in Kaliyuga charity and recital of Viṣṇu's name are the best.

In ch. 117 it is declared that no benefit comes from worship which is performed with stolen or unjustly procured material.

In ch. 116 the story of an ancient Rāmāyaṇa is narrated which differs from the familiar one by sage Vālmīki in some minor points. Daśaratha is said to have four queens instead of three, viz. Kauśalyā, Sumitrā, Surūpā and Suveṣā; Rāma's army crosses the ocean with the help of Śiva's bow named Ājigava; Rāvaṇa is the first to be killed by Rāma followed by the killing of Kumbhakarṇa. In this so-called ancient version supposed to have been composed much before the time of the historical Rāma many dramatic episodes including those connected with Viśvāmitra's hermitage, the bringing of Sañjīvanī by Hanumān, the abandonment of Sītā etc. are missing.

In ch. 115 thirty-six Purāṇas—18 major and 18 minor ones—have been listed in the following order: Brāhma, Pādma, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva, Bhāgavata, Bhaviṣya, Nāradīya, Mārkaṇḍeya, Āgneya, Brahmavaivarta, Laiṅga, Vāmana, Skānda, Mātsya, Kaurma, Vārāha, Gāruḍa and Brahmāṇḍa (*major*); and Sanatkumāra, Nārasiṁha, Māṇḍa, Daurvāsasa, Nāradīya, Kāpila, Mānava, Auśanasa, Brahmāṇḍa, Vāruna, Kālikā, Māheśa, Sāmba, Saura, Pārāśara, Mārīca, Bhārgava and Kaumāra (*upapurāṇas*: *minor ones*). There is duplication of two, viz. Nāradīya and Brahmāṇḍa without any explanation on the part of the author.

Acknowledgements

It is our pleasant duty to put on record our sincere thanks to Dr. R.N. Dandekar and the UNESCO authorities for their kind encouragement and valuable help which render this work more useful than it would otherwise have been. We are extremely grateful to Dr. N.A. Deshpande for translating the text. We are also thankful to all those who have been helpful in our project.

—*Editor*

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

Common and self-evident abbreviations such as Ch(s)—Chapter(s), p—page, pp—pages, v—verse, vv—verses, Ftn—Footnote, Hist. Ind. Philo.—History of Indian Philosophy are not included in this list.

ABORI	*Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute*, Poona
AGP	S.M. Ali's *The Geography of Purāṇas*, PPH, New Delhi, 1973
AIHT	*Ancient Indian Historical Tradition*, F. E. Pargiter, Motilal Banarsidass (MLBD), Delhi
AITM	*Ancient Indian Tradition and Mythology* Series, MLBD, Delhi
AP	*Agni Purāṇa*, Guru Mandal Edition (GM), Calcutta, 1957
Arch. S.Rep.	Archaeological Survey Report
AV	*Atharva Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Bd. P.	*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, MLBD, Delhi 1973
BG	*Bhagavadgītā*
Bh. P.	*Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, Bhagavat Vidyapeeth, Ahmedabad
Br.	*Brāhmaṇa* (preceded by name such as Śatapatha)
BS. P.	*Bhaviṣya Purāṇa*, Vishnu Shastri Bapat, Wai
BV. P.	*Brahma Vaivarta Purāṇa*, GM, 1955-57
CC	*Caturvarga Cintāmaṇi* by Hemādri
CVS	*Caraṇa Vyūha Sūtra* by Śaunaka, Com. by Mahidāsa
DB	*Devī Bhāgavata*, GM, 1960-61
De or GDAMI	*The Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, N.L. De, Oriental Reprint, Delhi, 1971
Dh. S.	*Dharma Sūtra* (preceded by the author's name such as Gautama)
ERE	*Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* by Hastings
GP	*Garuḍa Purāṇa*, ed. R. S. Bhattacharya, Chowkhamba, Varanasi, 1964

GS	*Gṛhya Sūtra* (preceded by the name of the author such as Āpastamba)
HD	*History of Dharma Śāstra*, P.V. Kane, G. O. S.
IA	*The Indian Antiquary*
IHQ	*The Indian Historical Quarterly*
JP	*Purāṇa* (Journal of the Kashiraj Trust), Varanasi
KA	*Kauṭilya Arthaśāstra*
KP	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press Edn., Bombay; also Kashiraj Trust Edn., Varanasi, 1971
LP	*Liṅga Purāṇa*, GM, 1960; also MLBD, Delhi, 1981
Manu.	*Manusmṛti*
Mbh.	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2014
MkP	*Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa*
MN	*Mahābhārata Nāmānukramaṇi*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur, VS 2016
MtP	*Matsya Purāṇa*, GM, 1954
MW	Monier Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, MLBD, Delhi, 1976
NP	*Nāradīya* or *Nārada Purāṇa*, Veṅkaṭeśvara Press, Bombay
PCK	*Bhāratavarṣīya Prācīna Caritrakośa*, Siddheshwar Shastri, Poona, 1968
Pd. P.	*Padma Purāṇa*, GM, 1957-59
PE	*Purāṇic Encyclopaedia*, V. Mani, English version, MLBD, Delhi, 1975
PR or PRHRC	*Puranic Records on Hindu Rites and Customs*, R. C. Hazra, Calcutta, 1948
ṚV	*Ṛg-Veda*, Svādhyāya Mandal, Aundh
Śat. Br.	*Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*
SC or SMC	*Smṛti Candrikā* by Devanna Bhaṭṭa
SEP	*Studies in Epics and Purāṇas*, A.D. Pusalkar, Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan (BVB), Bombay

CHAPTER SIXTYEIGHT

The Horse Sacrifice Ends

Śeṣa said:

1-6. Indra together with the gods tasting at the sacrifice the oblations cooked and seen by Rāmacandra, did not obtain satisfaction. Viṣṇu, Śiva, so also Brahmā having four faces, Varuṇa, Kubera and other gods tasted the oblations refined by Vasiṣṭha. The best brāhmaṇas also were as it were oppressed with hunger after taking the food. The treasure of pity (i.e. Rāma), having gratified all gods with the oblations, and being urged on by Vasiṣṭha, did what was necessary to be done according to the rules. The brāhmaṇas were pleased with the gifts; the great gods were pleased with the oblations. All being gratified on receiving their portions, went home. To the priests headed by the hotṛ (i.e. the priest reciting the prayers of the Ṛgveda at the sacrifice) he gave kingdoms in the four directions. Those brāhmaṇas who were pleased, gave blessings to Rāma in an auspicious manner.

7-18. Then having offered the full oblation, Vasiṣṭha said to the good ladies: "You should felicitate the king who has completed the sacrifice." Hearing those words, those ladies gladly scattered parched grains over Rāma who had vanquished Cupid by means of his handsomeness and was adorned with great gems. Surrounded by crores of kings going on foot, he went to the best river surrounded by groups of birds. As the lord of stars with his lustre going up and being surrounded by his wives, shines, in the same way Rāma surrounded by hosts of kings shone. Coming to know about that great festival, all people were hurrying and their eyes had become steady after seeing the face of the husband of Sītā. The people, seeing the lord of kings going with Sītā to the river and having desired since long to see (Rāma) were delighted. Many actors and singers, singing the bright glory (of Rāma), followed the lord of the earth saluted by the entire world. The female dancers, dancing there and disturbing the minds of their husbands, and sprinkling (water) over them with syringes, went to serve Rāma.

Smearing the great king with turmeric and saffron and smearing one another, they obtained highest joy. They, with necklaces of pearls put on the pairs of their breasts and marked with ear-rings of gold, touching the pairs of their ears, went along the path crowded with men and women. They duly reached the river flooded with auspicious and holy water.

19-24. Having gone there, Rāma with Sītā followed by Vasiṣṭha and others entered the holy water. All the kings and the people entered after him. With lovely syringes they sprinkled the water purified by the dust of his feet and saluted by the entire world over one another. All with very red eyes enjoyed more than they expected. That righteous Rāma, having sported for a long time along with Sītā with the waves in the flood of that auspicious water, again went out (of the river). The king having put on a silken garment, having (worn) a crown and ear-rings, having excellent bracelets with the beauty of armlets, having the charm of a crore of Cupids, and being praised by best kings, shone. The noble-minded king, having fixed the sacrificial post adorned with excellent colours on the bank of the river, obtained the wonderful glory in the three worlds, which was not easily obtained by other kings.

25. Thus, along with the daughter of king Janaka he, performing three horse-sacrifices, obtained matchless fame in the three worlds very difficult to be obtained even by gods.

26-38. O dear one, I who was asked (by you), have described (to you) the good story of Rāma. I have described the sacrifice in detail. O brāhmaṇa, what do you ask again? He who, through devotion for Viṣṇu, hears the (description of) the good sacrifice of Rāma, would, after having crossed (i.e. overcome) the sin of killing a brāhmaṇa, obtain the eternal Brahman. A sonless man would obtain sons; a poor man would obtain wealth; a person suffering from a disease gets rid of it; one that is bound gets free from bondage. Hearing Rāma's story even a wicked cāṇḍāla obtains the highest position. What to say of the best brāhmaṇa, solely intent on devotion! By remembering Rāma sinners would obtain the highest position, the highest heaven difficult to be obtained by gods like Indra. Those men who remember the best of the Raghus, are blessed.

In a moment they, having crossed the mundane existence, go to inexhaustible happiness. Every letter (of the story of Rāma) is a wild fire burning the bamboo in the form of a brāhmaṇa's murder. One should worship that teacher who makes one hear (i.e. recites to one) that. Having heard the story, one should give the reader along with his wife a couple of cows after having honoured him with garments, ornaments and food. O best brāhmaṇa, having fashioned charming, excellent, golden images of Rāma and Sītā shining with ear-rings and adorned with rings, they should be presented to a brāhmaṇa only. His deities and dead ancestors would then reach Viṣṇu's heaven only. You formerly asked me about Rāma's story. I told it to you. O brāhmaṇa, what else should I tell you, the intelligent one. Those who listen to this story, destroying the heap of (sins due to) brāhmaṇa-murders, go to the highest position, very difficult to be obtained by gods. There is no scope for doubt here that he who kills a cow or his son, or he who drinks liquor, or who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his wife), becomes purified in a moment.

CHAPTER SIXTYNINE

The Story of Kṛṣṇa Begins

The sages said:

1. O glorious one, we have duly heard from you the (description of) Rāma's horse-sacrifice. Now tell us the greatness (i.e. glory) of noble Śrīkṛṣṇa.

Sūta said:

2-3. O best sages, (please) listen to the nectar-like story of Śrīkṛṣṇa. I shall tell you what Pārvatī asked the lord of beings. Once goddess Pārvatī with her mind affectionate towards Śiva, having saluted him with reverence, said these words to him:

Pārvatī said:

4-5. The place of Viṣṇu staying without and within the crores of universes, is beyond them, is the chief one, the best one, and excellent. There is no place superior to the one which is Kṛṣṇa's charming place, dear to him. O great lord, I desire to hear it all. (Please) tell it.

The lord said:

6-15a. The highest, excellent secret place dear (to Viṣṇu) is more secret than a secret place, is holy, is very wonderful, and gives great joy. O goddess, it is great, very difficult to reach among all the places that are difficult to reach; it is full of all power, and is concealed among all places. This place of Viṣṇu is the chief among the places of the Sātvatas, is extremely difficult to reach, is eternal, is called Vṛndāvana, and is situated above the universe. It is the complete Brahman, happiness and glory, is eternal, is bliss, and is imperishable. Vaikuṇṭha is a part of its portion; on the earth there is Vṛndāvana itself. Whatever is the glory of Goloka is settled in Gokula. Whatever glory is (found) in Vaikuṇṭha is settled in Dvārakā. Whatever is the glory of that highest Brahman, it always resorts to Vṛndāvana. In the forest Kṛṣṇa's abode is especially great among them. Since that which is named Māthuraka is solely dear to Viṣṇu, therefore in the three worlds the earth is blessed. His own abode, named the region of Māthura, is superior; it is a concealed, multiform place, situated within a city. The Māthura region is of the form of a thousand-petalled lotus. Due to the roaming about of Viṣṇu's disc, the wonderful abode of Viṣṇu (has come about). Its pericarp and petals are extensive, and has sprung up with secret trees.

15b-23a. The twelve groves are important. In the order of importance they are: Bhadra, Śrī, Loha, Bhāṇḍira, Mahā, Tāla, Khadīraka, Bakula, Kumuda, Kāmya, Madhu(vana) and Vṛndāvana. They are twelve in number. Seven of them are (situated) in the west of Kālindī. The five on the east are (together) called Pañcavana (i.e. the five groves). There is a great, secret grove called Gokula and also Madhu(vana)-Vṛndāvana. This latter is

called the place of Kṛṣṇa's sport-delight. (Then there are:) Kadamba, Khaṇḍana, Nandavana, Nandiśvara, Nandanandana-khaṇḍa, Palāśa, Aśoka, Ketakī, Sugandhamānasa, Kaila, Amṛta, the place of his eating (food); Sukhaprasādhana, Vatsaharaṇa, Śeṣaśāyika; the village Śyāmapūrvodadhi, so also the city Cakrabhānu; Saṁketa, Dvipada, dusty due to the sports of children; Kāmadruma, Sulalita and the grove Utsuka. It is a place of the enjoyment of pastimes of various kinds, so also of the enjoyment of many sports; Nāgavistāraviṣṭambha (literally, stopping of the expanse of the serpent), and having secret trees growing in it.

23b-51. The great place called Gokula is the thousand-petalled lotus. The great place in it, its pericarp, is the excellent abode of Govinda on a golden seat and is adorned with a golden pavilion. The petals have sprung up in (i.e. from) the pericarp in due order in the (main) directions and intermediate directions. The petal which is said (to be situated) in the south is the best and the best among the best (i.e. most) secret places. In that petal is a great seat inaccessible to the Vedic and sacred texts. It is difficult to obtain even for the lords of the meditating saints, is the soul of all, and is Gokula. In the south-east there is the second petal, a secret petal. It is Saṁketa, Dvipada; in that region two huts are situated. In the east there is the third petal, an excellent and chief place. It is said to be hundred times more meritorious than the contact with all holy places like Gaṅgā. In the north-east is the fourth petal, and the place is on the seat of the inspired sages. A cowherdess would obtain Kṛṣṇa as her husband at that place due to her worshipping Kātyāyana. It is said that snatching off of the garments and ornaments (of the cowherdesses) took place there. In the north is said (to exist) the fifth petal, the best of all petals. Here itself is the petal resembling Karṇikā (literally, the pericarp), called Dvādaśāditya (i.e. having twelve suns). In the north-west is the sixth petal. Kālīhrada is said (to be situated) there. It is said to be the best of the best petals, and the chief place. In the west is said (to exist) the seventh petal, the best of all petals. It gives the desired boons to the groups of the wives of Viṣṇu. Here even a demon obtained salvation difficult to be obtained by gods. Here only is the petal called Brahmadala deluding

Brahmā. In the south-east is said (to exist) the eighth petal (called) Vyomaghātana. The killing of Śaṅkhacūḍa took place there. It is the place of the enjoyment of many sports. The eighth petal is well-known, and is said to be situated within the Vṛndāvana-forest. The glorious Vṛndāvana is on the south of Yamunā. There is seen the place of Śiva-phallus, called Gopīśvara. Outside it is the sixteenth petal, glorious and full of beauty, which, due to going round it in order, is said (to exist) in all directions. It is a great place, a great abode, named Svadhāmādhava. The first petal is the greatest, and its greatness is like Karṇikā (the pericarp). There is the Karṇikā on the Govardhana mountain which is lovely and is ever the abode of pleasure, is a grove full of great sports where Kṛṣṇa would be the lord of the Nityavṛndākānana. Kṛṣṇa became (there) a cowkeeper. What is the use of further talking much? The third petal is called Sarvaśreṣṭhottamottama. The fourth petal is called Mahādbhutarasasthala. There is the beautiful grove (called) Nandīśvara, and there is said (to exist) abode of Nanda. The fifth petal is called Karṇikādalamāhātmya. Here Gopāla (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) engaged in tending the cows, dwells. There, which is said to be the sixth petal, is said (to exist) Nandavana. The seventh lovely petal is called Bakulāraṇya. The eighth is Tālavana where the cows were killed. The ninth charming petal is called Kumudāraṇya. The tenth (called) Kāmāraṇya is the chief and the cause of all. There is Brahmaprasādhana (lit. decoration of Brahmā), and the manifestation of the disguise of Viṣṇu. It is the place of the pleasures of (i.e. due to) Kṛṣṇa's sports, and is said to be preeminent. The eleventh petal is called Bhaktānugrahakāraṇa. A bridge is constructed here; and the place is full of many groves. The twelfth lovely and charming petal is Bhāṇḍīra; there Kṛṣṇa was engaged in sports and was surrounded by Śrīdāman etc. The thirteenth best petal is known as Bhadravara. The fourteenth petal is called Sarvasiddhipradasthala. There is Śrīvana, which is charming, and is the cause of all splendour; it has a part of Kṛṣṇa's sports and enhances glory, beauty and fame. The fifteenth excellent petal is known as Lohavana. The petal resembling Karṇikā is said to be the sixteenth petal.

52-55. There is said to be a secret, excellent, great grove. (Kṛṣṇa) surrounded by keepers of calves (i.e. young cowherds) is engaged in child-sports. The murder of Pūtanā etc. and the breaking of twin Arjuna trees (took place) there. The young Gopāla, five years old, the ocean of love, joy and pleasure, and called Dāmodara, lives there. This is said to be a well-known petal, and best and excellent of all petals. The sport of Kṛṣṇa (takes place here). It is called Kiñjalkīvihāradala. It is also called Siddhapradhānakiñjalka.

Pārvatī said:

56. I desire to hear the importance and the wonderful secret of Vṛndāraṇya. O great lord, narrate it.

The lord said:

57-59. O most beloved one, I have told you the best, greatest mystery, the secret of secrets, and the rare of the rare. O goddess, it is watched over in the three worlds, and well-honoured by the lord of gods. It is desired by Brahmā and others; the place is resorted to by gods and inspired sages. The best among the meditating saints are devotedly always intent upon meditation on it only. There is the continuous singing and dancing of gandharvas and celestial damsels.

60-69. The glorious Vṛndāvana is charming and is an abode of complete joy and pleasure. There are many desire-yielding gems; and the water is full of the taste of nectar. The big tree there is surrounded by Kadamba trees. There is the lady Lakṣmī, the man Viṣṇu, produced from the tenth part of it. There (one sees) Kṛṣṇa, of the age of a boy, always of a joyful figure, walking dramatically, with a face having continuous sweet but indistinct talk, with the forest resorted to by devotees of Viṣṇu, of a pure nature, and full of love, engaged in the joy of the complete Brahman, full of the thoughts about him; being inspired by his image; (the forest was) charming due to the sweet notes and humming of the intoxicated cuckoos and bees, having the music of pigeons and parrots, with thousands of intoxicated bees, rich with the dance of the enemies of serpents (i.e. peacocks), full

of all amorous joyful sports; it was full of the pollen of flowers of various colours; it had the full moon always rising, and served with the sun having cold rays; it was without misery, free from grief, and old age and death. It was free from anger, free from jealousy, unbroken (i.e. complete) and without ego; it had the nectar of full joy; it was the ocean of full love and happiness. The great abode was beyond (all) qualities and was of the nature of full love, where due to horripilation tears were shed by trees etc.; then what can be said about Viṣṇu's devotees having consciousness! It was Vṛndāvana on the earth due to the constant contact with the dust of Kṛṣṇa's feet.

70-78. The Vṛndāvana is the seed-vessel of the lotus having a thousand petals, by the touch of which the earth is blessed in the three worlds. On the earth Vṛndāvana is a greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret) and a charming (place). It is an inexhaustible, unchangeable abode of Govinda, containing greatest joy. It is non-different from Govinda's body, and is the abode of the joy of (reaching) the complete Brahman. There salvation is had by the touch of the dust(-particles). What can be said about its importance? Therefore, O queen, by all means, keep in mind that forest. In the Vṛndāvana parks, (one sees) Kṛṣna having a boy's body. Kālindī went round its pericarp. The water of Kālindī is pleasant due to sports, is deep, and attractive due to fragrance; it was mixed with the nectar of joy; it is the dense place of honey; it is bright with many colours due to flowers like lotuses and blue lotuses. The water is lovely; it looks beautiful with birds like the ruddy geese with various sweet and indistinct notes; it is very lovely due to the waves. On both of its sides (there is a pericarp) which is lovely and fashioned with pure gold, said to be a crore times more meritorious than Gaṅgā (Gaṅgākoṭiguṇa). In the pericarp (Karṇikā) there is the Koṭiguṇa where Kṛṣna is engaged in sports. Kālindī, Karṇikā and Kṛṣṇa are not different from one another. They (just) have one body.

Pārvatī said:

79. O you not having a beautiful body, I desire to listen to the wonders of Govinda. O you treasure of compassion, tell (them to me).

The lord said:

80-107. In Vṛndāvana adorned with lovely sprouts and beautified with the foliage of the branches of good trees extending over a yojana, in a charming abode there is a very bright seat for abstract meditation. It is fashioned with eight angles and is charming due to various lustres. On it is an auspicious throne (decked) with rubies. There is an eight-petalled lotus lying comfortably in the pericarp. It is the great abode of Govinda. How can its greatness be described? A man should meditate upon Kṛṣṇa who is served by the group of cowherdesses remaining in (i.e. following) the advice of Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) who has the (proper) age and form for the divine station of the cowherds, who is the lord of Vṛndāvana, who is the chief of the station of the cowherds, who always has splendour, who alone is dear to the children of the station of the cowherds, whose childhood has broken into youth due to age, whose body is wonderful, who is without a beginning but is the origin of all, who is the dear son of the cowherd Nanda, who is to be sought after through the sacred texts, who is unborn, who is always charming to the cowherdesses, who is the highest abode, who is the highest form, who has two arms, who is the lord of the station of the cowherdesses, who is the son of a cowherdess, who is the only cause of the qualityless (Brahman), who is very glorious, who is fresh and pure, who has a dark lustre, who is charming, who is much glistening like the row of fresh clouds, who is pleasing to touch due to his great loveliness like a fully opened blue lotus, who gives comfort, who is glossy like the heap of collyrium that is expanded and is dark and attractive, whose entire (set of) hair is very glossy, dark, curly and fragrant, who is charming due to the dark lock of hair and the right part over it, who is bright on account of many colours and adorned with bright feathers of peacocks, who has on his crest a charming string of mandāra (flowers), who has put on lovely ornaments, who is at times adorned with a crown made with a multitude of big leaves, who at times has the ornament of a crown made with many gems and rubies, who is covered with unsteady hair, whose face is like a crore of bright moons, who has put on (his forehead) the mark of musk, who has been (smeared) with bright,

charming yellow pigment made from the urine or bile of a cow, whose eyes are long like very long petals, having the beauty of fully opened blue lotuses, in whose smile the creeper-like eyebrows dance (i.e. move) closely, and the sight is (i.e. the eyes are) charming, the tip of whose nose is charming on account of its beauty due to its being very beautiful and rising, who entices the three worlds with the rays of the pearls supposed to be found in the projection on the foreheads of elephants on the tip of his nose, who is lovely on account of his red and glossy lower lip resembling red lead, who puts on ear-rings resembling the shape of crocodiles and made of pure bright gold and of many colours, and the good cheeks of whom have the resemblance with mirrors due to the heap of rays of (i.e. shooting from) them (i.e. the ear-rings), on whose ears are placed mandāra and lotuses and who is well-adorned with chaplets of the shape of crocodiles, who has on his chest the (mark of) Śrīvatsa and Kaustubha, whose neck shines with a necklace of pearls, round whose arm are the bracelets and armlets with divine rubies shining and mixed with lovely gold, whose waist is adorned with small bells, whose beautiful feet are adorned with the beauty of sweet(-jingling) anklets, (on whose body) sandal etc. looks bright with camphor, agaru (sandal) and musk, who is painted with divine fragrant unguents mixed with a bright yellow pigment made from cow's urine or bile, who is shining with soft, yellow garment and with whose feet the collyrium is disturbed, whose lotus-like navel is deep, whose chaplet is depressed in the line of hair, whose pair of knees is quite round, who is lovely due to his lotus-like feet, whose palms and soles are adorned with (signs of) flag, diamond, gold and lotus, who having the row of rays shooting from his nails is the only cause of the complete Brahman. Some say that the unique supreme spirit, Brahman, is his portion; the wise ones say that Mahāviṣṇu is his tenth part; that one alone, who has three modes and who is fashioned with the essence of (materials required to) fashion all good things, is thought of in their hearts by the best meditating saints like Sanaka, who is lovely (as he has) vanquished innumerable crores of Cupids due to his neck that is turned (to a side), whose golden ear-rings shine when he has put his fine

cheek on his left shoulder, whose smile is accompanied by a side-glance, who deludes the three worlds with the sweet, indistinct notes of his flute put between the contracted lips, who is drowned in the ocean of love.

Pārvatī said:

108-115. O lord, tell me everything about the highest cause Kṛṣṇa, the highest position called Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Vṛndāvana, the eternal one, and the only cause of the qualityless (Brahman); tell me the importance of each secret, about the lovely wonder. O lord of lords, I desire to hear it.

The lord said:

O goddess, how much can be said about the greatness of him, the knowledge of whose moon-like rays cannot be had? Listen joyfully. In the innumerable crores of the universes, in the rise of the infinite (Prakṛti) with three constituents, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are equal to the parts of the measure of a croreth of a croreth of his feet. (These) arising from him are endowed with creation, maintenance, and destruction. The bodies of Cupid are the parts equal to the portion of a croreth of a croreth of his form. Born of his aṇḍāntara(?) they entice the world. Brahmā is (made of) a part equal to a croreth of a croreth of the lustre shining in his body. The forms of the sun are the partial rays equal to a croreth of a croreth of his light. Those of the form of rays which are a croreth of a croreth of his portion live due to rays of his body which are the nectar of great joy, which are of the nature of highest bliss and intelligence, and which are the only cause of the qualityless Brahman.

116-118. They say that the lustres of the gem-like (crescent) moon(-shaped) nails of his two feet are even the cause of the complete Brahman, difficult to be understood by the Vedas. (The fragrance) enticing the universe is but a part which cannot be measured (i.e. is negligible) of his fragrance; and the various fragrances are produced from the fragrance etc. of the flowers touched by him. The first (primordial) matter is Rādhikā, dear to Kṛṣṇa. Durgā and others having the three constituents are a

part equal to a croreth of croreth portion of her. The excellent Viṣṇu is produced from the touch of the dust of her feet.

CHAPTER SEVENTY

A Description of Śrīkṛṣṇa

Pārvatī said:

1. O lord, I desire to hear (the account worth) hearing of him and about those who are the members of his assembly. O you treasure of kindness, (please) narrate it.

The lord said:

2-7. (One can see) Govinda along with Rādhā seated on a golden throne. He has the loveliness of form as described before. His ornaments, garments and garland are divine. He, in his crooked posture (assumed with his body bent at three points while playing on his flute) is sweet and very glossy and is the pupil of the eyes of the cowherdesses. Outside sitting on the seat for abstract meditation (Yogapīṭha) covered with a golden sheet resembling a lion's skin(?) are the chief ladies dear to Kṛṣṇa and having a strong devotion for him in every limb (of their bodies). They are Lalitā and others, and are the portions of the primordial matter. Rādhikā is the primordial matter. In front of him is goddess Lalitā; in the north-west is Śrīharipriyā; in the east is Viśākhā; and after her, in the south-east is Śaibyā; Padmā is in the south; and then in the south-west, on the Yogapīṭha, in front of a bakula tree, is Candrāvatī, dear to him. Thus they remain in order. These eight are auspicious and chief natural forms, dear to Kṛṣṇa.

8-13. The chief form is Rādhā who is similar to Candrāvatī. Candrāvalī, Citrarekhā, Candrā, Madanasundarī, Priyā, Śrī, Madhumatī, Candrarekhā, Haripriyā—these are the sixteen original natural forms dear to Kṛṣṇa. At Vṛndāvana Rādhā is the (chief) goddess, so also Candrāvatī dear (to Kṛṣṇa). In front

are thousands of cowherdesses having identical virtues and beauty and charming eyes. They are lovely, are dressed attractively, are young and bright. They resemble the mass of pure gold, are very much pleased, and have lovely eyes; his form has got into their hearts, eager for his embrace; they have plunged themselves into the nectar of Kṛṣṇa; in their minds thoughts about him flash; they have dedicated their hearts to the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa, worshipped by their lotus-like eyes.

14-26. On the right are Śrutikanyās, gathered in thousands and myriads, having forms which have infatuated the world, having in their minds a longing for Kṛṣṇa; they have enticed the three worlds with many natural sounds; there they, overcome with love, sing the concealed (i.e. great) secrets; on the left are divine damsels, with divine dresses and splendid with love; they are proficient in many skills, and are full of many divine sentiments. They are endowed with excellence of beauty and are very attractive due to their glances; they, not being ashamed of Govinda, are eager for the touch of his body. Their minds are merged in devotion to him. They look with a smile and obliquely. Then outside the temple, clearly filled with his beloveds, (there are ladies) of a similar dress and age, of a similar might and valour, of similar virtues and deeds, to whom similar ornaments are dear. They are engaged in singing songs of similar notes and playing upon similar lutes. At the western door is Śrīdāmā; similarly at the northern (door) is Vasudāmā; in the same way, Sudāmā is at the eastern door and Kiṅkiṇī at the southern door. Outside it on the golden seat, surrounded by a golden temple, on another golden altar, adorned with golden ornaments (one can see) little Kṛṣṇa, surrounded by myriads and myriads of cowherds like Subhadra, having horns, lutes, flutes, canes and having (similar) age, dresses, forms and voice, and being overcome (with sentiments) and meditating upon his virtues, singing (his praise), drawn in pictures of wonderful forms, always shedding tears of joy, with their entire bodies full of horripilation, steady like best meditating saints; with trickling aloe-wood (paste), (he is also) surrounded by innumerable cowkeepers; outside it, on a golden rampart, bright with a crore of suns, and stupefied with sweet fragrance, is a great park

(spreading) in (all) four directions and having a glorious Pārijāta tree in the west.

27-31. Below it (is) a divine golden seat, decorated with gold; on it (is) a divine throne, decked with gems and rubies. On it (one can see), Vāsudeva, the lord of the world, who is the highest joy, who is beyond the three guṇas and of the nature of intelligence, who is the cause of all causes, who is dark like a sapphire and a cloud, whose dark hair is curly, whose eyes are broad like a lotus-petal, who has put on ear-rings of the shape of a crocodile, who has four hands, whose weapons are the disc, sword, mace, conch and lotus, who is without a beginning or an end, who is eternal, who is the chief, the Supreme Being, who is of the form of light, who is the great and ancient abode, who puts on the garland of wood-flowers, who has put on a yellow garment, who is glossy, who is adorned with divine ornaments, who has smeared himself with divine unguent, who is charming due to his lustrous body.

32-37. Then (one can) also (see) the eight ladies dear to Vāsudeva: Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, Nāgnajitī, Sulakṣaṇā, Mitravindā, Anuvindā, Sunandā, and Jāmbavatī dear to him, and also Suśīlā. They are bright, are surrounded by their retinue, and are intent on devotion. In the north (is) a very great park, having the yellow sandal tree; below it (is) a golden seat decorated with a jewelled pavilion in it on a petal fashioned with gold; on a bright throne (one can see) Saṅkarṣaṇa i.e. Balarāma, with Revatī; he is very dear to the lord, and not having different virtues and form; he is like a pure crystal; his eyes are like red lotuses; he has put on a blue strap, is glossy, and has put on divine ornaments, garlands and garments; he is always addicted to drinking liquor with his eyes red due to (drinking) liquor.

38-42a. In the best region in the south, remaining in the interior of the lovely navel, at the root of the Santāna tree, there is the embellishment of a jewelled temple. In it on a bright divine throne decked with gems and rubies, one (goddess) attends upon god Pradyumna seated upon it. He is full of the charm of the row of the essences of beauty deluding the world. He resembles a heap of dark lotuses; his eyes are like the petals of lotuses; he is (adorned with) divine ornaments and decorations and

(with) smearing of divine sandal; his wonderful body has the full beauty which has infatuated the world.

42b-52a. In the eastern park in the great forest, resorted to by divine trees, below there, is a golden seat adorned with a golden pavilion. On it on a shining, divine, bright throne (one can see) glorious Aniruddha with Uṣā; he is the lord of the world; he is dark like a dense cloud; he is very glossy; his hair is dark; his eyebrows are lovely, and resemble a bent creeper; his cheeks are good (i.e. charming); his nose is fine; his neck is nice; his chest is lovely and is extremely handsome; he has put on a crown (and) ear-rings; he is decorated with an ornament round his neck; his body is extremely lovely on account of the sweetness of the charming anklets; he is being propitiated by his dear attendants; music is dear to him; he is the complete Brahman, always full of joy; his nature is pure goodness; above him, in the atmosphere (one can see) Viṣṇu, the god of all gods; he is without a beginning; he is the source and of the nature of intelligence; he is intellect and joy, is supreme, and is the lord; he is beyond the three constituents; is unmanifest; is eternal; inexhaustible and immutable; his dark body has the beauty of the sweetness of the mass of clouds; he is very handsome due to his dark curly and glossy hair; his charming eyes are very long (i.e. broad) like the petals of a white lotus; he is surrounded by pure beings having crowns and ear-rings (dangling) about the cheeks; so also by lovely individuals, of the nature of intelligence and intent upon meditation on his form, having thoughts about him in their hearts, and with their eyes fixed on the tips of their noses.

52b-65. By means of body, mind and speech purposeful devotion is practised. On their left (he is surrounded by) yakṣas, gandharvas, siddhas, vidyādharas etc., so also by groups of very charming celestial damsels, intent on dancing and singing; and in front, in the atmosphere, on a comfortable seat, by all devotees of Viṣṇu, longing for Kṛṣṇa, and very much desiring service to his body; (he is surrounded by) Prahlāda, Nārada and others; so also by Kumāra, Śuka and devotees of Viṣṇu; so also by Janaka and others, having a bright (i.e. strong) sentiment, and intent upon inspiration out of the heart (*hṛdbāhya-sphūrtatatparaiḥ?*), with their entire bodies overcome with

horripilation, full of darting love and sprinkled with the nectar of secret. The hymn of twin letters (viz. Kṛṣṇa) is said to be the crest-jewel of all hymns and the origin of all hymns. Of all the hymns of the lord, the child's hymn (i.e. the hymn addressed to Kṛṣṇa, the child), is the cause. The hymn is the crest-jewel of all hymns (addressed to the) child. Resorting to full love and pleasure they mutter the name mentally. They desire a steady means of love for his lotus-like feet. Outside it on a very lovely crystal platform (one can see) in the west the door-keeper—Viṣṇu, who is fair, and has four hands; (he is sprinkled with) saffron, white and red flowers crowding (all) the four directions; he is adorned with a conch, a disc, a mace, a lotus, a crown etc.; he is red, has four hands, and has the lotus, the conch, and weapons like a disc and a mace. In the north, (one can see) a door-keeper, bright with a crown and ear-rings; he, Viṣṇu, is fair; has four hands, has a conch and weapons like a disc and a mace; he is adorned with crown and ear-rings etc. and has put on wood-flowers. On the eastern gate is a door-keeper; is fair and called Viṣṇu. The southern door-keeper is dark in complexion, has four arms, has ornaments like a conch, a disc etc. He is Śrī Viṣṇu of a dark complexion. He, who being restrained and pure, would read or listen to the account of Śrīkṛṣṇa with devotion, obtains love for Govinda.

CHAPTER SEVENTYONE

The Greatness of Rādhākṛṣṇa

The goddess (Pārvatī) said:

1-3 O holy one, O lord of all beings, O soul of all, O you the origin of everything, O lord of gods, O great god, O omniscient one, O you who show pity (to everyone), since I was pitied by you, I again say tenderly. O lord, you told me the hymns enticing the three worlds. (Now) tell me, by means of which particular things that god (Kṛṣṇa) having a very fascinating form, played with the cowherdesses.

Mahādeva said:

4-9a. Knowing about the descent of (Viṣṇu as) Kṛṣṇa, once Nārada, the best sage, playing upon his lute, went to the village of Nanda (literally, the cow-pen of Nanda). Having gone there and having seen there in Nanda's house the supreme ruler, the lord full of great concentration, who acted as a child, who looked as a god, who was lying on a golden couch on which a soft (bed-)sheet was spread, who was constantly, joyfully looked at by the cowherdesses, whose body was extremely delicate, whose sight was innocent, who was adorned with a mass of dishevelled, dark and curly hair, who manifested just one bud-like tooth by his sprout-like (i.e. delicate) smile, who illumined with his lustres (i.e. mass of lustre) the interior of the house on all sides, who was naked, he was extremely glad.

9b-14. He (i.e. Nārada) who was dear to all lords, addressing the lord of cows, Nanda, said to him: "To get the birth of Nārāyaṇa's devotees is extremely difficult. Here no (persons) know his matchless power. Even Śiva, Brahmā and others desire eternal bliss in him. The deeds of this boy give delight to all; and (people) like them gladly sing and hear about him, and greet him. Men have affectionate minds towards (i.e. men love) this son of yours whose prowess cannot be conceived. They will not be troubled by worldly existence. O best of the cowherds, give up all your desires in this world and the next world. With exclusive and singular mind, love this child." Speaking like this, the best sage went out of Nanda's house.

15-24a. He (i.e. Nanda), having saluted him, honoured him looking upon him as Viṣṇu and gave him leave (to go). Then the sage, the great devotee of Viṣṇu, thought: 'His beloved, glorious Lakṣmī, must have undoubtedly taken up the form of a cowherdess, descended (here) to play with Nārāyaṇa, Viṣṇu holding the Śārṅga bow. Today I shall look for her in every house of the residents of Vraja.' Thinking like this, the best sage, being (i.e. as) a guest entered the houses of the residents of Vraja. They, looking upon him as Viṣṇu, worshipped him. Seeing the great attachment of all the cowherds etc. to Nanda's son, the best sage mentally saluted them all. In the house of (one of) the cowherds, he saw a girl of a white complexion.

Seeing her, he conjectured: 'This must be Lakṣmī; no doubt about it.' Then the intelligent one entered the large house of certain excellent cowherd named Bhānu, a friend of the noble Nanda. He was duly honoured by him. The noble-minded one too asked him: "O good one, you are known on the earth for your devotion to piety. I observe your prosperity in wealth, grains etc. Do you have a worthy son or a daughter with auspicious marks, due to whom you will have fame pervading the entire world?"

24b-27. Thus addressed by the best sage, Bhānu brought his very lustrous and powerful son and made him salute Nārada. The great, excellent sage, having seen him, who was matchless in form on the earth, whose eyes were long (i.e. broad) like lotus-leaves, whose neck was nice, whose eyebrows were beautiful, whose teeth were fine, whose ears were beautiful, embraced him with his arms, shed tears of love, and affectionately and in a faltering voice said:

Nārada said:

28-31. This your boy will be a good friend of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Being alert, he will play with them day and night.

Then, when the best sage, after having talked to the excellent cowherd, decided to go, Bhānu spoke to him like this: "O god, I have (also) a daughter, resembling the wife of a god. She is younger than this boy. Her form (i.e. she) is dull and blind and deaf. Prompted by the desire for her prosperity, I seek a boon from you, O most glorious one. By just casting a pleasing glance at the girl make her quite composed."

32-37. Hearing these words, Nārada, with his mind attracted by curiosity, entered the house, and lifting up the girl rolling on the ground and with his mind overcome with great love, put her on his lap. Bhānu, too, reverential due to devotion, came near the excellent sage. Then the best devotee of Viṣṇu, the great sage, very dear to Kṛṣṇa, loving Viṣṇu, seeing her excellent wonderful figure, unseen and unheard of (before), became fascinated as before. Plunging into the ocean of great joy, a unique elixir, the sage, resembling a stone (i.e. being motionless) remained there (i.e. in that condition) for two muhūrtas. Slowly open-

ing his eyes, the best sage woke up. He was very much amazed, and remained silent only. The very intelligent one thought like this only in his heart:

38-46a. 'I, moving freely everywhere, have wandered over all the worlds. But nowhere have I seen any (beautiful woman) like this. I (can) move in the world of Brahmā, in the world of Rudra, and in the world of Indra. But nowhere have I seen one even a croreth part of her in beauty. I have seen the great worldy illusion, the glorious daughter (i.e. Pārvatī) of the lord of mountains, whose form fascinates all the mobile and the immobile (objects). Even she, of an extremely delicate body, does not at all have the beauty (like that of this girl). It is not at all seen that excellent ladies Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Kāntividyā, just touch (i.e. have) even the shade of her (beauty). I have seen Mohinī, the form of (i.e. taken up by) Viṣṇu, by which Śiva was fascinated. How can it even be similar to her (form)? Therefore, I do not at all have the power to know her true nature. Mostly even others do not know this dear wife of Hari. That growth in love, which now I have for the lotus-like feet of Govinda, on just seeing her, was never there before. Showing great magnificence, I shall praise the respectable one in a lonely place. Her form will cause great delight to Kṛṣṇa.'

46b-56a. Thinking like this, the sage, having sent the excellent cowherd somewhere, praised the girl of a divine form in a lonely place: "O goddess, O you controlling the great illusory power, O you of great lustre, O you having a very fascinating and divine body, O you who shower great sweetness, O you who have let loose the mind due to very wonderful love and delight, you have come wthin the range of my sight due to my indescribable great fortune. O goddess, your sight is always observed to be within (i.e. you always look within); and you appear to be gratified with great joy within yourself only. This your good (i.e. beautiful), pleasing, sweet, agreeable, charming face manifests great wonder and an indescribable rise of joy within. O you very beautiful one, you have the power of a bud to form pollen. You are of the nature of creation, maintenance and destruction. You are of a pure energy, of a quick power and of the nature of knowledge and the highest one. You have the highest heap of great joy of Viṣṇu. O you who have a wonderful

splendour, O you difficult to be obtained by Brahmā, Rudra etc., who are you? You never touch the path of meditation of the best meditating saints. You are the will-power, the power of knowledge and the power of action of the controller (of the world). It is just a part of you that my desire proceeds for. Of the highest lord Viṣṇu, of the magician, the child of illusion, inconceivable are the superhuman powers. They are just the portions of your portions.

56b-60. O you goddess, there is no doubt that you are the power of the nature of delight. In the form of just a child, Kṛṣṇa plays in the Vṛndāvana grove; you fascinate the (entire) universe. Of what nature is your wonderful form touched by youth? Of what kind is your youth, endowed with sportive glance with a smile due to longing for Viṣṇu as a man. O you dear of Viṣṇu, I desire to see that form of yours by which Nanda's son Kṛṣṇa will be enticed? O you great goddess, please show, through kindness, your own form to me who have bowed (before you) and have sought protection with you."

61-69. The best sage, with his mind devoted to her, and saluting that very great goddess, who was great and full of great joy, who was eager with great love, whose body was full of (love), whose eyes were auspicious, stood there, looking at Govinda and describing him like this: "Victory to you, O charming Kṛṣṇa; victory to you who are dear to Vṛndāvana; victory to you who have a charming knitting of the eyebrows; victory to you who are overcome with the sound of the flute; victory to you who have a chaplet of a peacock's tail-feathers; victory to you who entice the cowherdesses. Victory to you whose body is smeared with saffron; victory to you who have put on jewelled ornaments. When shall I, through your grace, see you in your childhood (i.e. as a child)—you who entice (everyone), along with this (girl) of a divine form, and having a beautiful body charming on account of youth, O lord of the world?" When he was praising (Kṛṣṇa) like this, she, that moment only, took up a divine, very fascinating form resembling (that of a young girl) fourteen years old and extremely charming. At that time only, other young girls of Vraja, of the same age, and having divine ornaments, garments and garlands, surrounded her. That motionless best sage became stunned with wonder.

70-79a. Then those friends of the girl, being full of compassion, sprinkled the sage with drops of water at the foot of a tree and revived him, and said to him: "O great sage, O glorious one, O lord of great meditating saints, you indeed have propitiated with great devotion, god Viṣṇu who fulfils the desires of his devotees. Since this (lady) dear to Viṣṇu, who is enticing due to her very wonderful age and beauty, who is difficult to be seen and approached by gods like Brahmā, Rudra, and lords of siddhas and sages, so also by other great devotees of Viṣṇu, has been seen by you due to your indescribable and inconceivable luck; therefore, get up, you brāhmaṇa sage, and quickly muster courage. Having gone round her by keeping her to your right, salute her again and again. Do you not see that the beautiful-bodied is extremely perturbed? Indeed, this moment only she will vanish. (Then) in no way you will (ever be able to) talk to her. O you best among those who know Brahman (or Vedas), you will not again (be able to) see her. But, in Vṛndāvana there is an auspicious Aśoka creeper (Aśoka-tree). In all seasons it is full of flowers; its fragrance pervades all directions. Not far from Govardhana, on the bank of the lake called Kusuma, you will see us all at midnight at its root."

79b-91. Having heard these words of them whose hearts were overcome with love, while the sage, having gone round her keeping her to his right, would salute her who was fashioned with many beautiful objects, (prostrating before her) like a staff Nārada called Bhānu and told him (about that) all-beautiful (girl): "Such is the prowess of the girl, that she cannot be obtained even by deities. But, in that house which is marked with her feet (i.e. her foot-prints) god Nārāyaṇa, Mādhava, himself lives. Lakṣmī also stays there with all prosperity. O best one, today (i.e. now) protect this great one, the most beautiful one, carefully, like a deity". Talking like this, and recollecting her form in his mind the best devotee of Viṣṇu entered the dense forest. The best sage, having resorted to the root of the Aśoka-creeper, waited for the deity—her arrival just there at night, remained there, thinking, overcome with love, of that dear one to Kṛṣṇa. Then, seeing at midnight, those very wonderful damsels who were seen (by him) before, who had put on variegated ornaments and garlands, the sage confounded in his mind, fell (prostrate) like a staff. All

those auspicious ones, having surrounded the sage, entered. Even the sage, desiring to ask something about what was dear to him and he liked, being overpowered by the language dear to beauty (i.e. unable to find appropriate words), could not do so. That deity of the Aśoka-grove, named Aśokamālinī, full of pity, came (there) and said to the best sage who stood with the palms of his hands joined, whose neck was bent due to the burden of (i.e. great) devotion, who was full of wonder and was confused, and who was most polite.

Aśokamālinī said:

92-103. O great sage, I always live in this Aśoka-bud. I always wear red garments, I wear red garland, and red unguents. I use buds red like red lead. I use chaplets, the red lotuses. I am decorated with red rubies, red armlets and red crown. Once, the cowherdesses, having put on variegated garments, while sporting with their beloved one, met just there; and then I devoutly and duly worshipped, with Aśoka-garlands, Viṣṇu taking up the form of a cowherd, and all those of the form of Lakṣmī. Since then I have always been staying among them and pleasing Lakṣmī's lord (i.e. Viṣṇu), the highest (god), with various decorations. I know everything from everywhere. I also know the secret of the cows, the cowherds, and the cowherdesses. You had the desire and said into your heart (i.e. to yourself): 'How shall I see that goddess, of a wonderful form, giving a wonderful joy, dear to Viṣṇu, looking (bright) like gold, having a bright diamond ring and having unsteady eyes? How shall I propitiate her feet with devotion?' Thus, O brāhmaṇa, you thought. In this matter, I shall tell you the account of the very noble sages who remained at the Mānasa lake and practised severe penance, who muttered effective hymns, who meditated upon Viṣṇu, and who constantly longed for his lotus-like feet. Today I shall tell you the great secret in the forest.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTWO

Devotees of Kṛṣṇa Born in Gokula as Cowherdesses

The lord said:

1-6a. O you beautiful goddess, listen with a concentrated mind: There was a sage, named Ugratapas who was firm in his vow. He, performing rites in honour of Agni, ate (i.e. subsisted on) fire, and practised a very wonderful penance. He muttered the great hymn, fit to be muttered and having fifteen letters, bound together by a desire-yielding hymn, securing desired objects from one giving the desired boon, with the word *Kṛṣṇāya* (to Kṛṣṇa), along with the word *Svāhā* (offered to), and giving great prosperity. He meditated upon the dark Kṛṣṇa, mad with dance, eager to grant a boon, having put on a yellow garment, with a flute put at his lower lip, endowed with fresh youth, and dragging his beloved with his hand. Thus, the great sage, engaged in meditation, cast his body after the end of hundred kalpas and was born as the daughter of the cowherd by name Sunandā.

6b-11. She was called Sunandā and held a lute in her hand. There was another sage named Satyatapas practising a great bow. He ate (i.e. subsisted on) dry leaves and muttered a great hymn, ending in devotion, bound by ten letters having the seed of desire. The best sage meditated upon Viṣṇu who put on a variegated dress, who held the creeper-like arms of Ramā, bright with bracelets, who was dancing, getting mad, repeatedly embracing (Ramā), laughing loudly, and having waves of joy in the sky (i.e. cavity) of his belly, holding the flute, who was decorated with the necklace reaching his knees, whose face with folds on his forehead was wet with the drops of sweat.

12-19a. Again and again, casting his body, the great sage, after ten kalpas, was born here from Nandavana, as the daughter of the cowherd named Subhadra, and known as Bhadrā. On her back is seen a divine fan. There was a certain sage named Haridhāman. He practised a difficult penance and always ate leaves only. He muttered a hymn of twenty letters, giving the fruit quickly. Then from the (hymn having) the seed of desire, he got upon it only (*obscure*!). There was Māyā; in front of her were water, swans, saffron and bright moon. Then, recollecting

and with a salutation (he muttered the hymn) with ten letters and in the charming bower of the jasmine-creeper he meditated upon the lord who was lying on his back on the beautiful bed of leaves, whose expansive chest was being repeatedly covered by a cowherdess who was greatly overcome with passion and whose eyes were red, with her pair of breasts, who (i.e. the lord) was being kissed on his cheeks, and whose lips were being gratified, who, the wonderful one, was with a smile holding his beloved with his arms.

19b-28. That sage, having cast many bodies was born after three kalpas as the daughter having auspicious marks, of a cowherd named Raṅga. She was known as Raṅgaveṇī. She was skilled in drawing pictures. On her teeth were variegated marks of red colour. There was (also) a sage named Jābāli, a teacher of the Vedas. He, engaged in austerities, roamed over this earth. Once, by chance, he went to a great forest extending over a myriad of yojanas. There he saw a very beautiful well which had on all sides crystal-walls, which was full of sweet water, which was cooled with breezes fragrant with blooming lotuses. In the region to its west, at the root of a banyan tree he saw a female ascetic who was practising a severe penance, was endowed with youth, was of an extremely beautiful form, whose lustre was like the lunar rays, all of whose limbs were beautiful, who had put her left hand on her waist, and made the position of the fingers of her right hand as practised in religious worship, whose eyes were steady, who had given up food and enjoyment, and who had remained steady. The excellent sage desiring to know her (to know who she was) remained there for a hundred years. At the end of that (period) the sage raised her, and politely said to her who was walking (away).

29-30a. He asked her: "Who are you of a wonderful form? What will you do? If it would be proper (to tell me), then please tell it to me." Then the young lady, who was extremely emaciated due to the penance, slowly said (to him):

30b-33. "I am the matchless knowledge of Brahman, who am sought after by best meditating saints. That I, meditating upon the supreme spirit, have been practising in this fierce forest for a long time penance with a desire for Viṣṇu's lotus-like feet. I am full of the joy of Brahman. My mind is pleased with that

joy. Yet, I am looking upon myself to be lonely for want of Kṛṣṇa's love. Now I am extremely dejected, and desire to cast this body in this auspicious well here only."

34-46. Hearing these words of her the sage being extremely amazed and with great love fell at her feet and asked her about the auspicious rite of the service of Viṣṇu after having abandoned dislike for the self. Having known (i.e. learnt) the hymn told by her he went to the Mānasa lake. Then he practised an amazing penance very difficult to practise. Standing on one leg and looking at the sun unwinkingly he muttered a great hymn of twentyfive letters. With great devotion he meditated upon Kṛṣṇa who was of the form of joy, who was moving along the streets of Vraja with a strange and sporting gait, who was making a jingling sound of his anklets with charming steps, who attracted the minds and bodies of the beautiful women of Vraja with the knots of their garments loose and suddenly embracing him, with various sports of love and side-glances accompanied by a smile, and with the charming golden flute called Sammohana, having the fifth note, and kissing (i.e. touching) his bimba-like lower lip, who had put on divine flowers and garments, and who had smeared divine sandal (to his body), who enticed the three worlds with the mass of the lustre of his dark body. Thus having worshipped the lord of the world with many hymns he was born in Gokula at the end of nine kalpas as a daughter having divine form, of a very famous cowherd named Pracaṇḍa. The girl of an auspicious face was well-known as Citragandhā and delighted the ten directions with the various fragrances of her body. See her, the auspicious one, who drinks sweet drinks from Vṛnda, who, being full of passion takes her husband on her body. Necklaces strike her breasts while in contact with them, while fragrances of lovely aloe-wood etc., fall out from them.

47-54. Other great sages whose minds are always pure and who eat (i.e. subsist on) air, muttering a great (i.e. very sacred) hymn, practised penance: 'A recollection to (i.e. of) Kṛṣṇa, having the skill of destroying passion.' Having recited the hymn of fifteen letters the great sages meditated on the figure of Kṛṣṇa, along with Agni's wife, the image which was having divine ornaments, whose fleshy waist was covered with a beautiful silken garment, whose crest was covered with peacock's feathers, whose ear-

rings were bright, who had put the right lotus-like foot on the left shank, who, after having folded his charming lotus-like hands, was wandering, who had put the flute with its cover moving at his waist-region, who gave delight to the eyes and minds of the cowherdesses, who had very wonderfully entered the hall that was filled (i.e. covered) with showers of flowers on all sides by the cowherdesses. Then having cast their bodies at the end of the kalpa they are now born here. On their ears are seen large ear-rings shining with gems. Round their necks are jewelled necklaces, and in their braids are (put) flowers.

55-59. There was a sage named Śuciśravas. There was also another sage named Suvarṇa. They, proficient in the Vedas, were the sons of Kuśadhvaja. With their feet put up (in the air i.e. standing on their heads), they practised a severe penance with a three-lettered hymn. With their minds controlled, they muttered (the hymn) saying 'Hrīm, Haṁsa'. They meditated upon Kṛṣṇa (living) in Gokula, a child ten years old, and constantly enticing the beautiful women looking at him, with his figure like Cupid and with his charming youth. At the end of the kalpa they, having cast their bodies, were born in Vraja as the extremely beautiful daughters of the cowherd Suvīra. In their hands were seen two parrots of auspicious sounds.

60-66a. There were four sages—Jaṭila, Jaṅghapūta, Ghṛtāśī and Karbu—who were blessed and were desireless here and in (i.e. for) the next world. With single devotion they sought the refuge of (Kṛṣṇa) the lover of the cowherdesses. Plunging themselves into water, they muttered a hymn having ten letters with a recollection (of Kṛṣṇa) at the beginning and end, and put together by the triad of Ramās. As cowherdesses, they with deep devotion meditated upon (Kṛṣṇa) who was wandering in every forest, who was valuing the charming, whose entire body was smeared with sandal, who had put on a China rose as an ear-ornament, who had undergone a change due to a garland of lotuses, and was covered with blue and yellow garments. At the end of three kalpas they were born in Gokula (as cowherdesses) of auspicious marks. Those charming ones with curved eye-brows are seated in front. Round their forearms are lovely bracelets supported by (i.e. decked with) gems etc. and divine pearls etc.

66b-73. In the former kalpa a sage name Dīrghatapas was the Vyāsa. His excellent and very intelligent boy, always remembering the feet (of Kṛṣṇa), abandoned his father, mother etc. and meditating on Kṛṣṇa went to a forest. There he, night and day, without eating anything, worshipped god Viṣṇu who had taken up the form of a cow(-herd). With great devotion, muttering the hymn of eighteen letters put together by Ramā, he reflected upon Hari who was seated in a golden pavilion upon a golden seat, who was holding a golden flute with the tips of his golden hands, who was whirling a golden lotus with his right hand, who looked charming due to his body clasped by his dear beloved of a golden complexion, who was laughing with great joy and who was looking at his hermitage. He, full of tears due to joy, with his body decked with horripilation, loudly saying, 'O lord, be pleased', and trembling, fell on the ground to salute the creator of the world with a prostration.

74-79. Saying loudly 'I am fatigued', Viṣṇu with his eyes full of joy, holding the hands of him who desired devotion, who had prostrated himself (before him) like a staff, touched him and spoke to that Śuka, who had obtained the form of his beloved: "O good one, you are my beloved. Thinking of my form, and having become the abode of my love, stay by me." Two cowherdesses are chief, are of the same age, and auspicious. They are practising a steady vow, are of a firm devotion, and are named after the same constellation. One is bright like heated gold and the other has the lustre of lightning. The eyes of one are sleepy, (while) the eyes of the other are pleasing and long (i.e. broad). He worshipped with great devotion the left and right sides of Viṣṇu; and at the end of the kalpa, he, having cast his body, was born as Upananda's daughter, resembling in beauty the petal of a blue lotus, in Gokula of that magnanimous one.

80-91a. That one is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's wife who had put on a yellow garment, who is covered with a red bodice, whose breasts are like golden pitchers, who has put on her entire body the veil of red lead, whose cheeks are shining with golden ear-rings, and who is very beautiful. She is adorned with the garland of golden lotuses, and her stout breasts are smeared with saffron. In her hand there is something to be chewed, given to her by Hari. She is very skilled in playing upon a flute and (other) musical instru-

ments; she is the attendant of Keśava (i.e. Śrī Kṛṣṇa), and some time is engaged by the delighted Kṛṣṇa in singing. An auspicious string of guñjā fruits shines round her conch-like neck. (She is) afflicted by love due to Kṛṣṇa's charm even in his absence; (Kṛṣṇa) causing this young lady to dress as he likes, would make her, singing extremely melodiously, dance, when her friends are playing upon musical instruments. Again and again, she devoutly embraces and kisses Govinda. She is dear to all cowherdesses and is also very dear to Kṛṣṇa. (Then) there was the son of Śvetaketu. He had mastered Vedas and Vedāṅgas. Giving up all this, he resorted to great penance. He constantly muttered the eleven-lettered hymn, meditating upon her who had served the feet of Kṛṣṇa, who was resonant like the sweet Gaṅgā, who was a dear power of Govinda, who was inaccessible to Brahmā, Rudra etc., who was devoutly resorting to the charming glory of (Kṛṣṇa). Making everybody laugh, and keeping himself on sylvan paths, and settling the world all round with smiling lustre, always thinking about the meaning of the hymn, he lived in the spring.

91b-100. He too, after a couple of kalpas attained perfection, and was born here. This girl of a thin body, having bud-like breasts, with a necklace of pearls shining round her neck, having put on a pure silken garment, having anklets, bracelets, armlets, and rings inlaid with pearls, acts like a child. She put on divine ear-rings which were oozing nectar and were auspicious. She had (a mark) like the dot of red lead in her braid that was dressed with musk. On her forehead she had a mark along with (sectarian) marks of sandal. That same tranquil one was seen to worship the highest position (i.e. Brahman). There was a handsome royal sage by name Candraprabha. By Kṛṣṇa's grace he got a son with a charming figure. He was known as Citradhvaja and was a devotee of Viṣṇu from his childhood. The king taught the great eighteen-lettered hymn through a brāhmaṇa to his good son who was handsome, well-composed and twelve years old. When the boy was being sprinkled with water full of the nectar-like hymns, he, that moment only, full of tears, saluted the king. That day the guileless boy of a pure heart, wearing a spotless garment, adorned with necklaces, anklets, strings, neck-ornaments, armlets and bracelets, having

touched (i.e being full of) devotion to Viṣṇu, went to the temple of Viṣṇu, remained (there) all alone, and thought:

101-107a. 'How shall I worship him who is worshipped (by his devotees), who fascinates the cowherdesses and always sports with them on the sand-bank of Kālindī and in the forest.' The boy thinking like this and with his mind very much perturbed, obtained a very great lore and also had a dream. Before him there was the figure of Kṛṣṇa. It was beautiful. It was made of stone. It was (placed) on a golden seat. It was marked with all (good) characteristics. It was dark like a blue lotus. It was having glossy beauty. It was adorned with peacocks' feathers. It was having charm due to three folds; it was gladly playing upon the flute which was made of gold and was put to his lower lip. It was served by two beautiful damsels standing on its left and right sides. It aggravated their passion with kisses, embraces etc. Citradhvaja, having seen Kṛṣṇa having a sporting attire like that, was abashed in his mind, and bent his head before him.

107b-116. Hari, laughing, said to the beloved on his right side: "O you lotus-eyed one, having produced a divine, wonderful form of a young lady, resembling you and being very bashful and seated on your body, look upon it as non-distinct from your body. Touched by the lustres in your body it will have your form." Then that lotus-eyed one went near Citradhvaja, and remained thinking his body to be non-different from her body. Then the lustres from her body filled his body. From the lustre of her breasts, too charming, stout breasts were produced. From the lustre of her buttocks, charming, round hips were produced. From the lustre of the hair, ornamented hair was produced. From (the lustre of) her two hands, hands were produced. Thus, everything—ornaments, garments, garlands etc.—was well-accomplished. And with fragrance inside, she became skilled in arts. Seeing, as one lamp (is lighted) from another, that fortunate girl on the earth, named Citradhvajā, who was charming with a smile and was beautiful, she, by her arms, seized her with love and gladly took her away. And having embraced the woman standing by Govinda's side, she said: "This is your female servant. Give her a name. With love tell her, the beloved, liked by you, (what) service (she should do to you)."

117-129a. Then, as she liked, she named her Citrakalā, and said: "For serving the lord of our life, full of virtues, you take the flute, always remain near him, and sing in various notes. This is the practice enjoined upon you." Then Citrakalā, obeying the order saluted Mādhava. Having seized the feet of his beloved and having taken the dust-particles from his feet (on her head), she sang very sweet songs, giving joy to both of them. Then Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of joy, embraced her with love. When she was fully (merged) in the ocean of joy, she woke up. Citradhvaja, overcome with great love, and intent on remembering that (Kṛṣṇa) only, the highest joy, wept with a free voice (i.e. freely). Since then, giving up food and pleasures, he, who was weeping, though talked to by his father etc. did not say any word. Resorting to Kṛṣṇa at night, he remained in his house for a month. (Then) going out (of the house) to a forest, he (there) practised a penance, difficult to be practised by sages. After casting his body at the end of a kalpa, that great sage, only due to his penance, was born as the auspicious daughter named Citrakalā, of a cowherd named Vīragupta. On her shoulder, a charming lute, adorned with the seven notes, was always seen. On (her) left (shoulder) a wonderful golden pitcher (decked) with jewels, remained. In her right hand, (she had) a jewelled spittoon. (Then) there was a sage, Kaśyapa's son, named Puṇyaśravas, who knew all duties. His father was a davotee of Śiva, and everyday praised the lord of gods, the lord of the universe (i.e. Śiva) who loves his devotees.

129b-134a. Śiva along with Pārvatī was pleased with him. He granted him a boon at midnight on the fourteenth day (of a fortnight): "Even as a child, your son will be a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Having performed his thread-ceremony in his eighth year, teach him the twentyone-lettered hymn which (will) be told (to you) by me. This hymn, called *Gopāla-vidyā* (lore of Gopāla), gives the power of (getting whatever is expressed by) words. On the tip of the tongue of him who accomplishes this, the wonderful account of Kṛṣṇa remains. The figure of the Infinite one himself, granting boons, comes (to him). Beginning to recite the hymn with the words *Kāmamāyā Ramākaṇṭha Sendrā Dāmodarojjvalā* (i.e. the bright Dāmodara with Indra etc.),

then reciting the ten-lettered (hymn) in the middle, he should again refer to them.

134b-147. I shall tell you the meditation with the sages etc. expressed by ten letters. He should remember the island full of light of the full treasure of nectar, and surrounded by Kālindī, (and) he should reflect on him in the grove of Vṛndāvana. It is covered with trees and creepers dropping flowers in all seasons, and (resounding) with the cries of dancing and intoxicated peacocks and the crying cuckoos and (humming) bees. In it is a great Pārijāta-tree which is a hundred yojanas tall and has the expanse of branches and twigs. At its spotless foot, the young cowherds holding flutes and syringes have formed a circle, surrounded by a circle of cows. Inside it there was a charming circle of the beautiful women of Vraja, who had many presents in their hands, whose minds were overcome with ardent passion, who had joined the palms of their hands (in obeisance); it was a circle of them who had put on white garments, who were adorned with bright ornaments, whose hearts were overcome with love. He would think about the dear words of the daughters of Śruti (i.e. sacred ordinance). Then on the jewelled altar he would think about Hari, covered with a silken garment, lying on the breasts of Rādhā on a portion of a plantain tree, and looking at her beautiful face with a charming smile on it, with his left foot slightly bent, embracing his beloved with the left hand holding a flute, touching her chin with his right hand, having the brightness of pearls, having large eyes like white lotuses, having put on a yellow and spotless garment, with his head shining with a load (i.e. mass) of peacocks' feathers, charming due to a necklace of pearls, having ear-rings of the shape of crocodiles shining on his cheeks, having a Tulasī-garland (hanging) up to his feet, having the ornaments like bracelets and armlets, adorned with anklets, rings and a girdle, being very delicate, being of the age of a child; the worship is said to be of ten letters only. The initiatory rite is marked with the scriptures.

148-154. Saying so the lord vanished; so also the goddess, daughter of the (Himālaya) mountain and his chaste wife. The sage having come (to his) son taught him like that. Puṇyaśravas, after having vanquished all the sages, described (in) various

(words) him who was having wonderful marks like form, beauty, cleverness and charm. Then the boy, delighted at heart, went out of his house. Eating (i.e. subsisting on) air, he practised panance for three myriad kalpas. At the end of it he was born in Gokula, in the house of Nanda's brother. Her name was Lavaṅgā. She observed (i.e. knew) the internal thoughts of Kṛṣṇa. In her hand is seen the mechanism with which the face was washed. I have thus told you about certain principal beloveds of Kṛṣṇa. That man, who devoutly reads or causes to read this chapter full of many pleasures of Kṛṣṇa along with the excellent girls in Vraja, having charming and smiling eyes, goes to the abode of the lord Śrī Vāsudeva.

CHAPTER SEVENTYTHREE

The Greatness of Mathurā

The lord said:

1-6. I have told you in (due) order, the wonder about which you asked me. Who is not stupefied there, where Brahmā and others are stupefied? Yet I shall tell you what the great sage (Vyāsa) said to Ambarīṣa, a devotee of Viṣṇu, connected with Śiva. The king, having come to the Badaryāśrama, saluted and praised, with a desire to know the Vaiṣṇava way of life, Vedavyāsa who was seated there, who had restrained his senses, who was noble, omniscient, and best among men: "Please protect me from this mundane existence. I am detached from the sensual pleasures; I salute them, I salute everything. How would I always obtain mental recourse to that highest Brahman, a position free from dejection, having a form of auspiciousness, intelligence and joy, the highest sky, the absence of ether, which is healthy, and seeing which the sages cross the ocean of worldly existence?"

Vyāsa said:

7-14a. You have asked me a great secret. I have not told it (even) to Śuka, my son, what you have asked me. But I shall tell it to you who are dear to Viṣṇu. Listen, this great universe

was of his form, was situated in him; it was unmanifest, free from pain; it was full of the lord. Formerly, I, subsisting on fruits, roots, palāśa-leaves, water and air, practised penance for many thousand years. Then Viṣṇu said to me who was engaged in meditation on him: "O you very intelligent one, what do you want to do, or what do you want to know? I am pleased; ask for a boon from (me) who am the best among the givers of boons. I tell you the truth that the mundane existence lasts till I am seen." Then, with my body full of horripilation, I said to Kṛṣṇa: "O Madhusūdana, I desire to see you with my physical eyes, whom the principal Vedas described as the truth, the highest Brahman, the light of the world, the lord of the world, the wonderful visible lord."

The lord said:

14b-19. I was formerly asked by Brahmā and was requested by him. I shall tell you also what I had told him. Some describe me as Prakṛti (i.e. the primordial matter); some call me Puruṣa, the lord. Some call me Dharma (i.e. Piety); some call me wealth; some call me Mokṣa (i.e. salvation) where there is no fear from anywhere. Some call me void. Some call me devotion. Some call me Sadāśiva. Others described me as the only eternal one remaining on the top of the Vedas, of a good disposition, without a change, and of the form of goodness, intellect and joy. See, today I shall show you my form concealed by the Vedas.

Then I saw, O king, a boy who was like a dark cloud, who was surrounded by cowherdesses, who was laughing along with the cowherds, who was seated at the root of a Kadamba tree, who had put on yellow garments, and was wonderful.

20-23a. (I also saw) a grove named Vṛndāvana, which was adorned with fresh foliage, which was resounding with the notes of cuckoos, which was charming due to (the presence of) Cupid. I (also) saw the river Kālindī, which had the colour of the petals of blue lotuses. I also saw the Govardhana (mountain) which was held up by the hands of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, for destroying the pride of the great Indra and which gave pleasure to the cowherds. I saw the cowherd (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) who was happy in the

company of women and who was playing upon the flute. On seeing him, the ornament of all ornaments, I was extremely delighted.

23b-29a. Then the lord, moving in the Vṛndāvana grove, himself said to me: "There is no greater form of mine than the one which is divine, eternal, partless, actionless, calm, and of the form of auspiciousness, intellect and joy, complete, having eyes like the petals of a fully blossomed lotus, which you saw (now). The Vedas describe this only as the cause of causes, which is true, eternal, of the form of great joy, a mass of intellect, eternal and auspicious. Know my Mathurā to be eternal, so also Vṛndāvana; so also (know to be eternal) Yamunā, the cowherdesses and the cowherds. This incarnation of mine is eternal. Do not have any doubt about it. Rādhā is always dear to me. I am omniscient, greater than the great. I have all my desires (fulfilled), I am the lord of all, I am all joy and greater than the great. In me appears all this universe, spread out by (my) Māyā (illusion)."

29b-31a. Then I spoke to the lord, the cause of the cause of the world: "Who are the cowherdesses? What are the cowherds? What kind of tree is this said to be? Who is the grove? What are the cuckoos etc.? What is the river? And what is the mountain? Who is this noble (one that has become the) flute, the only place of joy to all people?"

31b-36a. The lord, happy and with his lotus-like face pleased, said to me: "The cowherdesses should be known to be the Vedas. The young daughters of cowherds should be known to be the ṛcs (hymns). They are divine damsels, O king. They are endowed with penance and desire salvation. All the cowherds are sages, the forms of joy in Vaikuṇṭha. This Kadamba is the desire-yielding tree, the receptacle of the highest joy. The grove is called Ānanda, which destroys great sins. The cuckoos and others are siddhas, sādhyas and gandharvas. There is no doubt about it Some are his joyful heart, Yamunā is the body. This mountain is the servant of Viṣṇu and has no beginning. Listen, who is the flute. O brāhmaṇa, you know it (to be) like that.

36b-54. There was a brāhmaṇa, of a tranquil mind, engaged in penance and truthfulness. His name was Devavrata, and

he was proficient in ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites as enjoined in the Vedas. Being in the midst of Viṣṇu's devotees, he was engaged in (various) rites. O king, once he heard that the lord of sacrifice was (present in the house). The brāhmaṇa, determined (to see) me went to his house. That devotee of mine in his house worshipped (me) with a Tulasī-leaf and water and offered me something (like) a fruit and a root. The intelligent one affectionately gave him the water for bath and fruits. Smiling without faith, he too accepted it from the brāhmaṇa. Due to that sin he had the extremely fierce condition of a bamboo; and as a result of that religious merit he became dear to me. Due to that (merit), O king, he shines as the chief. At the end of the age, he, being one with Viṣṇu, will obtain (the state of) Brahman. Oh, men with wicked hearts do not know my ancient city, which is great, which is praised by lords of gods and serpents and sages, which is charming and old. Though there are cities like Kāśī, Mathurā alone is virtuous among them; birth, thread-ceremony, death or cremation in that gives salvation to men. When men become purified by penance etc., have pure hearts, and have constant meditation as their wealth, then only they see my city, not otherwise, even after hundreds of kalpas, O best brāhmaṇas. The residents of Mathurā are blessed, and are respected even by the residents of heaven. Their greatness is immeasurable, and all of them have four hands. The residents of Mathurā do not see any defect due to thousands of births and deaths in those in whom (other) men see a fault. Those who are even poor, but who remember Mathurā, are (really) blessed. There the god, the lord of beings, giving salvation even to the sinners (lives). That great lord of beings, who is always most dear to me, never leaves the city due to affection for me. That man of bad conduct who would not salute the lord of beings or would not worship him, would not see this my self-shining city, called a great deity. How would that sinful man who would not worship my great devotee, viz. Śiva, obtain devotion to me? Those mean men who do not salute the lord of beings, do not remember him or praise him, have their minds mostly deluded by my Māyā (illusion). Even the boy Dhruva, engaged in worshipping me, obtained a pure place, obtained with difficulty by the grandsires. A man, being lame, or blind,

would come to my city Mathurā, difficult to be reached by gods and would cast his life there.

55-56. O glorious Vedavyāsa, do not have any doubt at all about the secret of the best of the Vedas, which I have divulged to you. He, the pure one, who would recite or listen to with devotion this chapter narrated by the lord, will have eternal salvation."

CHAPTER SEVENTYFOUR

Arjuna's Wish and Its Fulfilment

The lord said:

1-3. Once, in private, glorious Uddhava, dear to the lord and an attendant of his, asked Sanatkumāra: "Where is that great place which is always the abode of gods, where Govinda sports everyday with the cowherdesses? If you have affection for me, tell me the account of (Govinda's) sport and whatever else that is wonderful, if you know it."

Sanatkumāra said:

4-6. As occasion arose, I have told what that noble Arjuna, of a good vow, and the attendant of the lord, at some time seated on the bank of Yumunā, at the root of a certain tree, saw and did—his experience in loneliness. I shall tell you that. Listen with great attention. But you are not to divulge it here and there (i.e. anywhere).

Arjuna said:

7-12. O you ocean of compassion, O lord, be pleased to tell me all that which Śaṅkara and others, so also Brahmā and others have not seen or heard. What have you told before? The cowherds' wives are dear to you. How many kinds do they have? How many are they in number? How many names do they have? Who are they? Where are they? Where are they settled? How many (i.e. what) are their deeds? O lord, what is their age?

What is their dress? O lord, with whom and where will you sport in privacy in every forest that is eternal, that has eternal happiness and eternal grandeur? Where and of what kind is that eternal and great place? If you have that kind of favour (towards me) then please tell all that to me. O you glorious one, O you who destroys the distress of the distressed, you will (please) tell me all the secret, which even I have not asked and which is not known to me.

The lord said:

13-29a. That is my place. Those are my dear ones. Such is my sport, which is imperceptible even to men who are (to me) like my own life. This is the truth. O dear one, when told about it, you will be eager to see it. How other people can, when it cannot be seen even by Brahmā and others? Therefore, O dear one, desist (from asking about it). What (do you lose) without that?

Hearing these very fearful words of the lord, Arjuna, being helpless, fell at both his lotus-like feet (prostrating himself) like a staff. Then the revered lord, affectionate towards his devotees, raised him with his arms, and with great love said to him: "What is the use of telling about it now? For you are going to see it. Having with great devotion propitiated that glorious goddess Tripurasundarī, in whom everything has come up, remains even now and will merge, present yourself to her. Without her I can never give this position to you."

Having heard these words of the lord, Arjuna, with his eyes full of joy, went to the feet of the glorious goddess Tripurā. Having gone there he saw the altar of the desire-yielding gem, very much decorated with staircases fashioned with various jewels. There (he saw) a desire-yielding tree which was bent with many flowers and fruits, and which was brightened due to foliage, having leaves, tender in all seasons and dripping with sprays of flowing honey and unsteady due to wind; which (i.e. the tree) was resounding with parrots, flocks of cuckoos, sārikās and pigeons, so also with sportive partridges and (other) charming birds; which had at its foot a divine, very wonderful, jewelled temple which was shining with bright jewels, and charming

like a wild fire. There was a jewelled throne, made of bright gold and enchanting, and very wonderful.

29b-31a. Arjuna, saying, "I am known as Arjuna", and having repeatedly saluted, by folding the palms of his hands, and full of devotion to the goddess who resembled the young (i.e. morning) Sun, who was decorated with many ornaments, who was endowed with fresh youth, whose four arms resembling creepers shone with a goad, a noose and a bow, who was very much pleased and attractive, whose lotus-like feet were adorned with the rays of the gems in the crowns of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa (i.e. Śiva) etc., who was covered with (i.e. who possessed) the (supernatural powers) like aṇimā,[1] sat in a secluded place. The goddess, the treasure of compassion, knowing his adoration and good temper, and overcome by his recollection said (to him) tenderly:

The goddess said:

31b-37. O child, which rare gift have you made to a person worthy to receive gifts? Which sacrifice have you performed? Or, which penance have you practised here (i.e. in this world)? Or formerly which (kind of) devotion have you accomplished? Or which difficult and auspicious, great act have you done, so that the lord has, indeed, gladly done you a favour, which is the most secret, and which cannot be had by anyone else? O child, that favour which the universal soul has done to you, is not (done by him) to the people of the mortal world, living on the earth, (so also) to deities etc. living in heaven, and not at all (done) to all his devotees who are best ascetics and practise abstract meditation. Then, come on; knowing the lake, my seat, resort to it. The goddess fulfils all desires. (Therefore) go with her; and having duly bathed there, quickly come (back) here.

38-46a. Then only, Arjuna went there, bathed, and came like that (i.e. as he was told). The goddess made him who had bathed and come (back), offer nyāsa[2], mudrā[3] etc., and told into

1. Aṇimā—The superhuman power of becoming as small as an atom.
2. Nyāsa—Assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, which is usually accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations.
3. Mudrā—Name of certain positions of the fingures practised in religious worship or devotion.

his right ear the lore (called) *Bālāvidyā* which gave instant success, which was great, which had for its goal half the portion of Śiva (i.e. Pārvatī), which was unique and which was adorned by everything. (She also made him) practise religious austerities, worship and mutter the prayer five lakh times; and having duly carried out the performance (of worship) with the buds of karavīra tree, the goddess, kindly spoke to him this (i.e. these words): "Worship me in this manner only. Then, when I shall be pleased, you will be entitled to the sport of Kṛṣṇa due to my favour. This rule has been formerly formulated by the lord himself."

Having heard like this, Arjuna worshipped her with that hymn. Then having performed the worship and muttering, he pleased the goddess. Then, having performed an auspicious sacrifice and having bathed duly, Arjuna regarded himself as blessed, as one whose almost all desires were fulfilled, and as one having every success in his hands.

46b-51a. At this time the goddess, coming to him, spoke, with a smiling face, to him: "O child, now go into the interior of that house". Then, Arjuna hastily and joyfully got up, and full of immeasurable delight, he saluted her in the manner of a staff (i.e. by prostrating himself before her). Then, ordered by the goddess, Arjuna, along with the friend of the goddess went to the place of the lord of Rādhā, which is inaccessible even to siddhas. Then he was shown Vṛndāvana which remained above Goloka, which was stable, sustained by wind, eternal, the abode of all happiness, in which the great festival of Kṛṣṇa's dance with the cowherds constantly went on. He saw the great secret full of the feeling of love.

51b-54. By her words (i.e. order) only he saw that secret, and being beyond himself and overcome with enhanced love, he fell there. Then regaining consciousness with difficulty he was raised by her by (holding) his arms. Due to her words of consolation, he somehow became stable. "Tell me what other penance should be practised by me?" Thus, full of anxiety to see him, he was unsteady. Then holding him by her hand, she went towards the southern direction of that place.

55-61a. Going along a good region, she spoke these words

(to him): "O Arjuna, in order to bathe enter this (lake) which is auspicious, has extensive water, has the shape of a thousand-petalled lotus with a bud in the centre, four waterfalls and four streams, and is full of a multitude of wonders. On entering into its interior, you will notice a special property. To the south of it is this lake. There is drunk honey and spirituous liquor distilled from the madhūka tree, after which the stream (flowing) from Malaya (mountain) is named. This park is full of flowers, where, in the spring season, Kṛṣṇa celebrates the vernal festival in honour of Cupid, heaped with vernal flowers; where they, day and night, praise the incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, by whose mere recollection the sprout of love would be (rising) in the heart of an ascetic. Then, having bathed in this lake, and having gone to the bank of the eastern lake, and having bathed in its water, accomplish your desire (i.e. desired object)."

61b-74a. Then having heard the words, when Arjuna plunged into the water of the lake, which was tinged with the pollen dropped from white lotuses, lotuses opening on moonrise, (other) lotuses and red and blue lotuses, and which was agreeably perfumed with honey-drops, which was shaken by the notes of corpulent swans, whose four banks were decked with jewels, which had ripples due to gentle breezes, she vanished just there. The charmingly smiling one got up and on seeing around, was confused. He instantly saw himself (to be turned into) a wonderful, excellent lady, who had a slim, fair, charming body like the rays of pure gold, whose age was that of a sparkling youth, whose face resembled the autumnal moon, whose hair was very dark, curly, glossy and shining with jewels, whose curls of hair on the plate (-like forehead) were brightened up due to the rays from the mark of red lead, who had vanquished Cupid's bow due to the knittings of the creeper-like eyebrows being manifest, whose wagtail-like eyes were dark like clouds and sportive, whose round cheeks were sparkling due to the bright lustre of the jewelled ear-rings, whose wonderful creeper-like arms were delicate like lotus-stalks, whose sprout-like hands took away all the beauty of autumnal lotuses, who had put on a waist-band made of gold and arranged cleverly, whose hips were shining with jingling girdles, whose beautiful place of hips was covered with a shining garment, whose lotus-like feet were very charming due

to the jingling jewelled anklets, who possessed the skill in the various arts of love being manifested, who was endowed with all (good) characteristics, who was adorned with all ornaments. Due to the illusion of (i.e. created by) the lover of the cowher-desses he forgot whatever belonged to his former body; and after that, being very much astonished, stood there, not knowing what to do.

74b-80. In the meanwhile, there was heard a sudden, grave voice in the sky, saying: "O beautiful lady, go along this (path) only to the eastern lake. Having bathed in its water, accomplish the (object of your) desire. O you of an excellent complexion, there are your friends. Do not sink. They will, there only, accomplish (for you your) desired choice." Hearing these divine words, she went to the eastern lake which had many wonderful streams and which was crowded with various birds, which shone with quivering white lotuses, white lotuses opening at moonrise, (ordinary) lotuses and blue lotuses that were quivering, and with rubies, which had a good bank of (i.e. decked with) lotuses, whose four banks were adorned with various lovely arbours of creepers and trees having abundant flowers. Having bathed (there), she stood for a moment. Then she heard in her ear (i.e. with her ears) the tinkling of small bells tinged with the (sound of) jingling girdles and sweet anklets.

81-88. Then (she saw) a bevy of young damsels that had wonderful youth, who had put on wonderful ornaments, whose figures and speech were wonderful, whose bodies were wonder-ful, who were unique, whose amorous actions were the same and wonderful, whose conversation was interesting, whose laughter and beholding were agreeable, whose beauty was sweet and wonderful, who possessed all sweetness, whose charm of under-standing had reached the extreme, who were wonderfully beauti-ful, whose beauty was wonderfully glossy, whose favour etc. was wonderful, who were a heap of all wonders, whose appearance etc. was wonderful. Seeing that great wonder and thinking a little in her heart, she, scratching the ground with her toe, re-mained (there) with her face hung down. Then they hastily look-ed at one another: 'Who is this one, belonging to my class, that has created curiosity (in us) for a long time?' Having thus ob-served her, and (thinking) for a moment, 'she should be known'

(i.e. 'we should know who she is'), they, clever in deliberation, deliberated, and came to see her out of curiosity. One of them, a wise one, named Priyamudā, came (to her) and with sweet words and affection spoke to her:

Priyamudā said:

89-91. Who are you? Whose daughter are you? Whose beloved are you? Where were you born? Who brought you into this (region)? Or have you come on your own? Tell all this to us. What is the use of anxiety? Is there any trouble to anyone in this place of great joy?

Thus asked by her, she bowed through modesty; and enticing their minds, she spoke in a sweet voice.

Arjuna said:

92-97. I do not know anything as to who I am, as to whose daughter I was born, whose beloved I was, who brought me here or if I came here on my own; but the goddess might know it. (Please) hear what is told by me, if you believe my words. To the southern side of this, there is a lake. I came to bathe there, and remaining there only I became fearfully eager. Then looking all round in (every) direction, I heard a wonderful voice in the sky, "O beautiful lady, go along this (path) only to the eastern lake. Having bathed in its water, accomplish the (object of your) desire. O you of an excellent complexion, there are your friends. Do not sink. They will, there only, accomplish (for you your) desired choice."

98-104a. Having heard these words I came here from there. My mind is full of dejection and joy and I am fully overcome with anxiety. I came here, and after bathing in its water, I heard many kinds of auspicious sounds, and then I saw you, the great ones. Physically, mentally, and through words, I know this much only. O respectable ladies, this much I have told you, if you like. Who are you? Whose daughters are you? Where were you born? Whose beloveds are you?

Hearing those words of hers, that Priyamudā spoke: "Let

it be so. O auspicious one, we are his beloveds. We are daughters happily sporting with the Moon of Vṛndāvana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa). We are self-delighted. So we have come here as the cowherdesses. These are the groups of the sacred texts; these again are the sages. We are cowherdesses. I have told you about our nature.

104b-121. (We are those) most beloved to the lord of Rādhā due to (our) mirth. We always sport irregularly; we always play and move. This is goddess Pūrṇarasā. This is Rasamantharā. This one is Rasālayā by name; and this is Rasavallarī. This is Rasapīyūṣadhārā; this is Rasataraṅgiṇī; and this is Rasakallolinī; and this is Rasavāpikā; this is Anaṅgasenā; and this is Anaṅgamālinī. This young lady is Madayantī and this is Rasavihvalā. This is Lalitā by name, and this is Lalitayauvanā; and this is Madanamañjarī. This is Kalāvatī by name, and this one is known as Ratikalā. This is Kāmakalā by name; this is Kāmadāyinī. This young lady is Ratilolā; and this young lady is Ratotsukā; and this one is Ratisarvasvā; and this one is Raticintāmaṇi. Some of these are always delighted and always give love. After this (come) the groups of the scriptures. Listen to (the names of) some of these: This one is Udgītā; this one is Sugītā; this dear one is Kalagītā. This young lady is called Kalasurā; this young lady is Kalakaṇṭhikā. This one is Vipañcī; this one is Kramapadā; this one is known as Bahuhutā. This is one known as Bahuprayogā. This lady is called Bahukalā. This one is called Kalāvatī; and this one is known as Kriyāvatī. After this (come) the groups of the sages. Some of them are here: This one is named Ugratapā; this one is known as Bahuguṇā. This one is Priyavratā by name; and this one is said to be Suvratā. This one is known as Surekhā. This young lady is known as Suparvā. This is Bahupradā. This one is called Ratnarekhā. This one is known as Maṇigrīvā; and this one is Suparṇā; (and these are) Ākalpā, Sukalpā, Ratnamālikā. This (lady of) beautiful eyebrows is Saudāminī; and this one is Kāmadāyinī; and this one is called Bhogadā; this chaste one is Viśvamātā. This one is Dhāriṇī; and this is Dhātrī; this one is Sumedhā; and this one is Kānti. This one is Aparṇā; this one is known as Suparṇā; and this one is Sulakṣaṇā. This one is Sudatī. This one is Guṇavatī; and this one is known as Saukalinī. This one is called Sulocanā; and this one is known as Sumanā. (These are known

as) Aśrutā, Suśīlā, and Ratisukhapradāyinī. Next are we, the cowherdesses, that have come here.

122-138. O you having a face like a lotus, get acquainted with some of them. This one is Candrāvatī; this auspicious one is known as Candrikā. This is Candrāvalī. This one is Candrarekhā and this is Candrikā. This one is called Candramālā and this one is known as Candralikā. This is Candraprabhā and this lady is known as Candrakalā. This one is Varṇāvalī; this one is Varṇamālā; this one is Maṇimālikā. (This one) is called Varṇaprabhā; this one is Suprabhā; this one is Maṇiprabhā. This one is Hārāvalī; this auspicious one is Tārāmālinī. This one is Mālatī; this one is Yūthī. (These are) Vāsantī and Navamallikā. This one is Mallī; this one is Navamallī. This one is known as Śephālikā. This one is Saugandhikā. This one is Kastūrī; this one is Padminī; this one is Kumudvatī. This one is Rasollāsā; this one is Citravṛndā; this one is Surekhā; this one is Svarṇarekhikā. This one is Kāñcanamālā; this other one is the chaste Asantatikā. All these have surrounded (you). Others also are to be introduced to you. O you beautiful, young lady, you will amuse yourself with us and with these. Come on to the bank of the eastern lake. There, O friend, having duly given you a bath, I shall give you a hymn, giving success."

Thus suddenly taking her (to the lake) and having duly bathed her, she made her accept, according to the proper rites, and in brief, the excellent hymn of the beloved of the Moon of Vṛndāvana, which was excellent and belonged to the germ of Varuṇa (-hymn), and put forward by the seed of the hymn sacred to Fire, which was endowed with the fourth note, and decorated with a point of sound, and sewn between the Praṇavas and extremely difficult to get in the three worlds. Every success comes by merely accepting the hymn. There is the repetition of the name of a deity accompanied with burnt offerings. There is meditation; and there is a number of sacrifices and the success due to muttering of prayers. Along with her friends she gladly worshipped the goddess whose body was fair like heated gold, who was adorned with various ornaments, whose form and beauty were wonderful, who was well-pleased, and who gave boons according to proper rites, and with white lotuses and karavīra flowers etc., with camkaka flowers and lotuses, so also with other fragrant

flowers and (other objects) having fragrance, with water for washing feet and rinsing mouth, with charming incense and lights, so also various offerings of eatables; then she repeated the hymn for a lakh times; she made offerings according to the proper rites, praised her and fell (prostrate) on the ground like a staff.

139-143. Then without a wink the goddess was praised with a longing for her. She, through illusion, got ready her shadow, and put, as it were through force, the beloved, near her. She was surrounded by her friends, and was delighted. Due to the worship, muttering of prayers, eulogies, devout salutations, she manifested herself through grace. Her complexion was like gold or campaka flowers. She was bright due to beautiful ornaments. Her figure was lovely due to beauty in every limb, large and small. Her face was beautiful like the full moon in autumn. Her smile and appearance were kind and simple. She was attractive in (all) the three worlds. She brightened the ten directions with her lustre. Then that goddess, granting boons and affectionate towards her devotees, spoke:

The goddess said:

144-154. The words of my friends are true. Therefore, you are my dear friend. Get up, come along, I shall fulfil your desire.

Arjunī, having heard the words of the goddess which were (but) the longing of her heart, and with her body lovely due to the sprout-like horripilations, with her eyes full of tears, and again overcome with love, fell at the feet of the goddess. Then she said these words to her friend-goddess, Priyaṁvadā. "Holding her hand, and cheering her up, bring her near me." Then, being zealous by the order of the goddess, Priyaṁvadā took her like that and came near the goddess. The goddess, dear to Hari, went to the bank of the northern lake, and having duly bathed her and made her worship according to the proper rites and preceded by a solemn vow, made her accept the hymn, granting good success, of (i.e. sacred to) the Moon in Śrī Gokula. The vow is called Gokulanātha, is old, and adorned by Mohana (i.e. Kṛṣṇa); the hymn gives all success and is preserved in all reli-

gious treatises teaching magical and mystical formalities. She, knowing the songs of Govinda gave her steady devotion. She told her the meditation and the enchanting king of hymns. It is told in the religious treatise called Mohana. Even its recollection gives success. One should meditate upon (Kṛṣṇa), dark like the petal of a blue lotus and adorned with many ornaments, and having beauty like that of a crore Cupids, and full of love. For purification, she told this secret to Priyaṁvadā.

Śrī Rādhikā said:

155-167a. Till her excellent initiatory rite would be over, be attentive, and along with your friends, protect her.

Having kept (there) the shadow of her own and of her beloveds, she went near the lotus-like feet of Kṛṣṇa. That Rādhikā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa, remained there as before. Here, by the advice of Priyaṁvadā, she prepared an auspicious eight-petalled lotus, and having written that wonderful auspicious hymn, and drawn the mystical diagram giving success, with bright yellow pigment, saffron, and sandal mixed together, and having made Nyāsa etc., and having duly offered water for washing the feet, materials for worship, and having offered worship to Nanda's son with many flowers of the season, with saffron and sandal incenses, lights, offerings of eatables, tāmbūlas and perfumes used to scent the mouth, and with garments, ornaments and flowers, and having, along with all followers, weapons and vehicles, praised and duly saluted him, she remembered him. Then the lord, Yaśoda's son, influenced by devotion, with a smile and wavy side-glances and thoughts said to goddess Rādhikā: "Quickly bring her here." The goddess (thus) ordered, sent for friend Śāradā, and she brought her suddenly before the playful one. Having come in front of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and overcome with love, she, observing everything wonderful, fell on the ground after being turned into gold. Having somehow got up with difficulty, and having slowly opened her eyes, she, full of burden of perspiration and horripilation and trembling, saw there a beautiful and attractive place.

167b-177a. There was also a desire-yielding tree, which was having bright emerald-like leaves, which was having foliage

with sprouts, which was delicate, and had golden stems, which had crystal-like shoots and roots, which granted rich objects of desire, and which gave the desired fruits to a suitor. Under it was a jewelled temple. There was a jewelled throne. There (i.e. on it) was an eight-petalled lotus. There were the two treasures[1] viz. Śaṅkha and Padma, placed on the left and right (sides). In the four directions were placed the desire-yielding cows at proper places. Around it was the Nandana garden. It was served by the Malaya-breezes. It was scented with lovely fragrances of flowers of all seasons (and) thus had defeated (the fragrance of) Kālāgaru (sandal). It was cool due to the shower of the drops of honey and was very lovely. Its interior was constantly resounding with the hummings of the swarms of female bees intoxicated on tasting the honey. It was resounding with the sweet notes of cuckoos, pigeons, sārikās, and female parrots, and others in (i.e. hidden behind) leaves. It was full of the dances of intoxicated peacocks and enhanced the passion of love. It had the beauty of the thin (layer) of darkness like collyrium produced by the emission of juice.

177b-196a. She saw Kṛṣṇa whose hair was very glossy, dark, curly and fragrantly perfumed; on whose head was tied the best tail of a peacock intoxicated with madness; on whose left side was the ear-ornament of flowers resorted to by bees; who was shining with the mirrors of his cheeks, bright with the bee-like hair; who was shining with the beauty of the large forehead having a beautiful mark; whose nose was lovely like the sesamum-flower and the eagle's beak; whose lips were charming and like the bimba fruits; who inflamed passion of love with his gentle smile; who looked lovely due to the necklace resembling a wild flower; whose both large and charming shoulders were shining with the garland (of the flowers) of the divine tree, resorted to by thousands of intoxicated female bees; who was adorned with the Kaustubha on the region of the chest shining with a pearl necklace; who had the mark of Śrīvatsa, who was attractive on account of his hands hanging up to the knees; who was very handsome on account of having his waist like that of a

1. Nidhi—The treasure of Kubera. They are nine in number: Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, Nīla and Kharva.

lion and with a deep navel; who was lovely due to not long and very round knees like a good tree; who was adorned with excellent ornaments like bracelets, armlets, and anklets; whose hips were covered with a portion of his yellow garment; who had vanquished a crore of Cupids in beauty by means of his loveliness; who enchanted (others) by means of charming songs proceeding from his flute; who made the three worlds plunge into the ocean of happiness; who had the arrogance of Cupid in every part of his body; who was tired due to his interest in dancing. There were deities appointed at respective places, observing his internal feelings, having fixed their eyes on his face, who were in due order and with respect carrying separately a chowrie, a fan, a flower, a perfume, sandal, and tāmbūla, a mirror, a drinking vessel, a spitting pot, and also other objects of sport, so also frankincense and an amulet. Arjunīyā, having seen in confusion on the left side of the pleasing goddess Rādhikā, propitiating and offering a tāmbūla to him of a bright smile, was overcome with the passion of love. Then Śrīkṛṣṇa, who knew everything, knowing her to be like that, seized her hand, and he the lord, the great master of magical art secretly sported with her in the entire pleasure-forest. Then putting his sport-like arm on her shoulder and coming to Śāradā, said to her: "Bathe quickly this slim-bodied lady of a gentle smile, fatigued due to sport, in this western lake." Then that goddess Śāradā (took her) to the western lake, (and) said to her, "Take bath". The fatigued one did like that. She who got to the interior of the water, again turned into Arjuna and got up at the place where the lord of gods and the chief of the beautiful Vaikuṇṭha stood. Seeing Arjuna dejected and broken-minded, Kṛṣṇa kindly touched him with his hand and put him (back) to his nature.

Śrīkṛṣṇa said:

196b-198a. O Dhanañjaya, I bless you. You are my dear friend. In the three worlds there is none else like you who knows my secret. O Arjuna, you will curse me if you tell anyone the secret about which you asked (me) and which you have experienced.

Sanatkumāra said:

198b-200a. Thus having received his grace and having taken decision due to being bound by oaths, Arjuna, with his mind delighted and having wonderful recollections, went home from that (place). I have thus told you the entire secret of Govinda that is known to me. I swear you if you tell it to him.

The lord said:

200b-204. Having heard these words the follower of the cowherd got success. He went to Vṛndāvana in the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa. There he, knowing the daily sports of Kṛṣṇa, stays even today. I did not tell this secret to Nārada, even though I was asked by him. Yet, having reached the natural form, he obtained it. O you auspicious one, like one of your stock, you are not to tell the secret which I told you through love (for you), to anyone else.

He who would read or listen to this wonderful chapter describing the greatness of the lord's devotee, obtains pleasure in Hari.

CHAPTER SEVENTYFIVE

Nārada's Experience

Pārvatī said:

1. O lord, you have told me in various ways the secret of Vṛndāvana. Due to which particular religious merit did Nārada obtain the natural form?

The lord said:

2-6. Once, formerly I desired to know a wonderful account. From the lotus-like mouth of Kṛṣṇa I heard the secret told by Brahmā. Nārada asked me. Then I got this. "I am not at all able to tell its greatness. What shall I do? Remembering his

oath I am distressed in my mind." Hearing these words of mine, when he became sad, then, O dear one, I called Brahmā and ordered him: "Tell Nārada what you told me." Then Brahmā, hearing my words, went with Nārada near Kṛṣṇa and asked him that only.

Brahmā said:

7. O you lord of the subjects, what is that Vṛndāvana forest of thirtytwo (parts)? O lord, I desire to hear (about it). If I am fit (to hear about it, then) tell it to me.

Bhagavān said:

8-14a. This charming Vṛndāvana is just my unique abode where there are actually these beasts, trees, insects, men and gods, who stay near me. When they (will) die they (will) come to me. Those wives of the cowherds that live in my abode, are the female devotees. The gods (also) are devoted to me. This forest of mine, which is of a divine nature, is (having an area of) five yojanas. This Kālindī called Suṣumnā (the artery in the human body lying between Iḍā and Piṅgalā), is a great river of nectar; and in it gods and beings live in a subtle form. I have pervaded (the forest) on all sides, and I never leave it. In every yuga appearance and disappearance take place here. This place is full of lustre, and it is invisible to the physical eyes. In the yuga, see my secret, my prowess—the Vṛndāvana. It can never be seen by gods like Brahmā.

The lord said:

14b-16. Having heard that, Nārada saluted Kṛṣṇa and Brahmā, and came to the Miśraka Naimiṣa forest on the earth. There he was well-received by the best sages like Śaunaka; and they asked him: "O brāhmaṇa, tell us wherefrom you have come now." Hearing that Nārada said: "Having heard the secret of Vṛndāvana from Kṛṣṇa's lotus-like mouth, I have come from Goloka."

Nārada said:

17-18. There repeatedly a number of questions were asked.

There I heard all the hymns and spells. I shall truly tell (you) those only according to the questions (asked by you).

Śaunaka and others said:

19. If you favour us, then tell us the secret of Vṛndāvana, which Brahmā told you.

Nārada said:

20-22a. Sometime, on the bank of Sarayū we saw Gautama who was wise, very unhappy and had his mind full of anxiety. Seeing me, the divine Gautama fell on the ground (i.e. prostrated himself before me). I said to him: "O child, O child, get up. If you like, tell me why you are called wise".

Gautama said:

22b-24a. From your mouth (i.e. from you) only, I have heard the fact about Kṛṣṇa like that. (I have also heard) many times the secret called Dvārakā and Mathurā. But from your lotus-like mouth I have not heard the secret about Vṛndāvana, from (i.e. by hearing) which my mind will be steady, O good preceptor.

Nārada said:

24b-32a. This is a great secret, the secret of secrets. Formerly Brahmā told me that secret about Vṛndāvana (when I had said to him): "O lord of gods, O father, tell me the secret of Vṛndāvana." Hearing this desire (of mine), he remained silent for a moment. Then he said to me: "O child, go to Mahā (i.e. great) Viṣṇu, my lord. Undoubtedly I must also go there with you." Saying so, and taking me (with him) he went to the abode of Viṣṇu. He told Mahā Viṣṇu what I had said to him. Hearing that Mahā Viṣṇu himself ordered the self-born one (i.e. Brahmā). "By my order, you take the sage Nārada, and arrange for his bath in the lake called Amṛta." Ordered by great Viṣṇu the self-born one acted like that with me. Having entered the Amṛta lake, I took bath there. Just at that moment I was (i.e. I found myself) near women, beyond (i.e. on the other side of) the lake. (I was) turned into a woman, endowed with all (good) characte-

ristics and was very much amazed. Seeing me coming, those (women) repeatedly asked (me):

The women said:

32b-35. Who are you? Wherefrom have you come? Explain your conduct.

Listen to what I said on hearing their agreeable talk. "Where I have come from, who I am, how I have become a woman—all this appears like a dream. Am I confused on the earth?" Hearing those words of mine, the goddess spoke to me in a sweet sound: "This is the city by name Vṛndā, which is always dear to the Moon in the form of Kṛṣna; and I am the goddess Lalitā, gone beyond the fourth state and without parts (i.e. whole)."

36-39a. The great goddess, who was addressed like this, and whose mind was soft with pity, again said to me: "Come along with me." All other women, devoted to Kṛṣṇa's feet, said the same thing to me: "Come along with her." O you who resemble gods, the fourteen-lettered hymn of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa—the noble one, and also of that goddess was then kindly narrated to me; and just at that moment, I got her resemblance.

39b-45. With them, (we) went where the eternal Kṛṣṇa remained. The lord, who was merely of the form of the Good, the Intelligence and the Joy, and of that of a woman, and whose heart was delighted due to the women, again and again said to me: "Come along O dear one, O beloved, embrace me devoutly." O you best brāhmaṇa, there only he enjoyed (with me) for a year. Then that best lover said to that goddess Rādhikā: "This was my natural form there, which had taken the form of Nārada. Take her to the Amṛta lake, and arrange for her bath." Then I spoke agreeable words to my lover. "I am Goddess Lalitā and that Rādhikā who is celebrated in songs. I am called Vāsudeva, who always is of the nature of the art of love. I am truly of a feminine form, and I am the ancient woman, and I am goddess Lalitā, and in a manly form I have Kṛṣṇa's body.

46-53. O Nārada, there is no difference between us. This is the truth, the (only) truth. He, who knows, along with the (code of) conduct and convention, the fact and usual practices about

me, so also the hymn (sacred to me), is dear to me like Lalitā. This sacret (place) named Vṛndāvana, is my abode. This is to be disclosed at no place. It should never be told to a brute." After that goddess Rādhikā took me to the lake, waited there, and went (back) near the feet of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa. Then immediately after plunging (into the lake) I came (back) as Nārada, having the lute in his hand, and repeatedly engaged in gladly singing that great secret. Having saluted the self-born (i.e. Brahmā), I went to Viṣṇu's assembly. The self-born one saw that, but did not say anything at that time. O child, I have told you a great secret. You too have to guard carefully the (secret about the) unique, perfect abode of the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa, like (that of) the paramour of one's mother. As I have told the agreeable (story) along with its secret to my dear disciple Gautama, in the same way I have narrated fully to you the great secret.

54-55. O brāhmaṇas, if sometime it would be disclosed wheresoever, then certainly there would be a curse from the Moon in the form of Kṛṣṇa, O best sages.

He, who would read or listen to this excellent chapter full of the sports of Kṛṣṇa goes to the highest position.

CHAPTER SEVENTYSIX

The Greatness of Kṛṣṇa

The lord said:

1-3. Here, hearing that Śiśupāla was killed, Dantavakra came to Mathurā to fight with Kṛṣṇa. Hearing that Kṛṣṇa got into a chariot and came with him to Mathurā. Then he killed him, and having crossed Yamunā, and having gone to Nanda's abode, he saluted his parents and consoled them. He was embraced by them. He embraced all the old cowherds, consoled them, and pleased all living there by (giving them) many garments and ornaments.

4-6. On the charming sand-bank of Kālindī (i.e. Yamunā), crowded with auspicious trees, he, day and night enjoying sports with the cowherdesses, lived for three nights. In that region, all people like the cowherd Nanda, with their sons and wives, so also beasts, birds and animals, having divine forms, got into an aeroplane and reached the highest place—Vaikuṇṭha. And Śrīkṛṣṇa, having given all the residents of Nanda's cow-pen his own infallible place, and being praised by hosts of gods, entered the glorious Dvārāvatī.

7-9. There he was everyday worshipped by Vāsudeva, Ugrasena, Saṁkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Akrūra etc. He of an omnipresent form, enjoyed on very soft beds, strewn with flowers of the divine trees in the divine, jewelled bowers of creepers, with his queens numbering sixteen thousand and eight. Thus, for the welfare of the gods, for destroying the entire burden of the earth, he descended in the Yadu family, and having destroyed all the demons (and thus) having destroyed the great burden on the earth, having released the immobile and mobile living in Nanda's abode and at Dvārikā from the bondage of the worldly existence, he established them in his great, eternal, charming abode meditated upon by the meditating saints. Being always waited upon by divine queens etc. Vāsudeva said to all: "Brahman was unseparated like (the particles of) hail and ghee. Freed from the constituents (of the Primordial Matter), he, living in the Prakṛti (the Primordial Matter), melted and went to heaven."

CHAPTER SEVENTYSEVEN

A Description of Kṛṣṇa

Pārvatī said:

1-2. Tell me in detail the importance of the meaning and the words of the hymn; so also (tell me) the nature of the god, and (about) the splendour of his places. O lord of gods, (tell

me) all (about) the great abode of Viṣṇu and Hari's (i.e. Viṣṇu's) different modes called eternal bliss.

The lord said:

3-6a. In the excellent Vṛndāvana (one sees) Kṛṣṇa surrounded by crores of cowherdesses. Gaṅgā is a great power there. The Ānandakānana is (also) there. It is made fragrant by fragrant breezes (blowing) over many good flowers. It is cool and has the colour of the divine ripples of the daughter of Kalinda (i.e. Yamunā). It has come in contact with the best sages—the devotees of the lord like Sanaka etc. It is adorned with flocks of cows, bellowing joyfully and sweetly. It is covered with boys having charming garlands and ornaments and dancing.

6b-13a. There is a glorious desire-yielding tree, covered with gold. It is rich with many gems and corals. It is bright with many gem-like fruits. At its root is a jewelled altar. It is brightened by the rays of jewels. There (i.e. on it) is an excellent golden throne made of the triad (of the Vedas); (one can see there) the lord of the world who is seated there, who is beyond the three constituents (i.e. beyond Prakṛti), who is immutable, who resembles a crore of moons, who is bright like a crore of suns, whose handsomeness is like that of a crore of Cupids, who illumines the ten quarters, who has three eyes, two hands, who is fair and bright like heated gold, who is always embraced by beautiful women, who is always everywhere respected, who is meditated upon and influenced by Brahmā and others and Sanaka and others, who is always surrounded by crores and crores of scriptures that have obtained the bodies of cowherdesses repeatedly kissing him, embracing him and laughing, and with their hearts set upon the spirituous liquor (coming) from his lotus-like feet.

13b-18. That goddess who among them is bright like heated gold, who brightens up all directions and makes them bright as (with) lightning, is the Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti), who has pervaded all this. She is of the nature of creation, maintenance and destruction. She is beyond knowledge, ignorance and the triad (of Vedas). She is of (his) natural form, is of the nature of power, of the nature of illusion (Māyā) and is full of intelligence. She brings about the cause of the bodies of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The entire mobile and immobile world is grasped by illusion. Due to her similarity with Viṣṇu, Rādhā is called Vṛndāvaneśvarī. A man should meditate like this, upon him, god Kṛṣṇa, the lord of Vṛndāvana, who remains embracing her, who is shaking due to the influence of passion for kissing and embracing. He would obtain success.

19-21. That noble one, who knows this best hymn, hymn of (i.e. sacred to) him, and mutters or listens to it, is very difficult to find. (There are) Rādhikā, Citrarekhā, Candrā, Madanasundarī, Śrīpriyā, Śrīmadhumatī, Śaśirekhā, Haripriyā, beautiful like gold, deluding and shining with horripilation due to love, having paleness and perspiration, attached due to love, talking agreeably. (Then there are) Suvarṇamālinī, Śāntā, Surasā and Rasikā.

22-23. She who leads the full life of a woman, who is affectionate to the helpless, who is of a pure heart, who has fully drunk the nectar of (Kṛṣṇa's) name, is called Rādhā. Rādhā is endowed with a prolonged smile, has the lustre of heated gold, is the river of surging love, a choice collyrium for (better) view.

24a. She who possesses pity and envy, who lives in the empire of charity, who indulges in the joyful battle of copulation, is called Citrarekhā.

24b-27a. She whose body is fair, who is not very tall, who is always engaged in instrumental music, who gesticulates helplessness, who is overcome by swoon and horripilation, who remains on the right side of Hari (i.e. Kṛṣṇa), to whom all hymns are dear, who possesses sweetness due to desire for love (-making), is called Candrā.

27b-30a. She whose gait is sportive and slow, who has charmingly closed her eyes, who is bright and full of the stream of love, who looks charming due to expanded collyrium, who is interested in Kṛṣṇa's love, who is eager for the sound of Kṛṣṇa's dance, who possesses egotism, who has condemned the moon with her face, who is clever in (speaking) sweet words, who is the crest-jewel of those who have curbed their senses, who is endowed with a charming smile, is Madanasundarī.

30b-31. She who is interested in the faultless dance of Kṛṣṇa, who is dark (yet) charming, who attracts Hari's heart through love and affectionate glance, who has conquered her senses, who has curbed her anger, is called Priyā.

32-34a. She whose body is fair like well-heated gold, who has a sportive gait and is beautiful, whose figure is sweet due to the strikingness of the love caused by Cupid and horripilation, whose face endowed with a charming smile has put down the moon, who is skilled in (speaking) sweet words, who is the crest-jewel of those who have restrained their senses, and who is intent upon the fulfilment of love, is Madhumatī.

34b-40a. She who is endowed with the fever of delusion, horripilation and stream of love, who diverts herself with charity (looking upon it as insignificant) as dust, who is a great dancer following the sound of Kṛṣṇa's dance, and who is always Kṛṣṇa's beloved, is Śaśirekhā. She is Kṛṣṇa's soul. She is excellent, is dark, has lovely and tawny eyes. She is fascinated by the love for his feet; sometimes she is touched by horripilation. At Śivakuṇḍa she is Śivānandā; on the bank of Dehikā she is Nandinī. She is Rukmiṇī at Dvārāvatī; and in the Vṛndāvana-grove she is Rādhā. This goddess of mine has become Devakī at Mathurā; similarly at Citrakūṭa she is Sītā. On the Vindhya (mountain) she is Vindhyanivāsinī. At Vārāṇasī she is Viśālākṣī; and in (i.e. with) Viṣṇu she is Vimalā. Kṛṣṇa who graced her, gave her the rule over Vṛndāvana. At other places she is the goddess and is Rādhā in the Vṛndāvana-grove. Kṛṣṇa has always a happy body, who is called bodiless.

40b-48a. He having Kṛṣṇa's body is described as the superintending deity of Air, Fire, Sky (i.e. Ether) and Earth, so also of Brahmā. Though the sun is powerful, yet is not designated with power; in the same way Kṛṣṇa endowed with brilliance, certainly deludes time. He does not have a material form, produced from marrow, flesh or bones. He possesses a wonderful power, is another lord, and having an eternal body, is the soul of all. Hardness is accidental as in the case of (particles of) hail and ghee. The surface of the foot of Kṛṣṇa of unlimited primary substance is not a deity (*obscure*!). In the mass of dust in Vṛndāvana, there are crores of Viṣṇus. In Ānandakiraṇa, the Moon of the universe (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) is surrounded by a group. The souls are parts of his rays as the nature of constituents is present in the soul. Kṛṣṇa is surrounded by (i.e. having) two arms. He never has four arms. There, surrounded by a cowherdess, he always sports. Govinda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) alone is a man; Brahmā and

others are women only. From that nature appears. This lord is a mode of nature.

48b-51. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are the first Prakṛti and Puruṣa. Except the lord of Vṛndāvana, everything is the product of Prakṛti. Due to their appearance, this world appears, and breaks on their disappearance. As gold does not perish (even though its products may perish), so Kṛṣṇa does not fall even if (his incarnation like) Matsya perishes. This expanse of the three constituents (guṇas) (i.e. the mundane existence) is the expanse of him who sports in Vṛndāvana. The ripple of an ocean turns into a wave; but the ocean is not (newly) produced.

52-55. There is no woman resembling Rādhikā, and no man resembling Kṛṣṇa. There is no (better) age than adolescence; that is the great innate disposition of Prakṛti. Adolescence should be thought upon. Vṛndāvana-grove should be thought upon. The greatest form is (that of) Śyāma, and the greatest delight is the first god. Childhood lasts up to the fifth year. Boyhood is up to the tenth year. Adolescence lasts for eight and five years. The limit (of it) is the fifteenth year. Adolescence, springing up from youth (*yauvana*) is called fresh youth (*navayauvana*). That age is his all-in-all; other age (than that) is unreal (*prapañca*).

56-62. I salute the charming childhood, boyhood and adolescence. I salute the young cowherd Kṛṣṇa who is of the form of Cupid-like cowherd, who is the cowherd-Cupid, of the nature of an adolescent and is wonderful, and whom they call the Cupid-enticer, whose youth has just broken up (i.e. set in), who is the great ocean of continuous, matchless nectar-like joy. The lord of Śrī is victorious. The body of him having the form of youth is hidden. Men of different minds, according to the difference in their likings, see him who is one only, immutable, ancient, who is to be known through meditation in the group of the cowherdesses. I salute him, the lustre of whose nails is Brahmā, who is meditated upon by gods like Brahmā, who is beyond the three constituents (i.e. Prakṛti), who is the lord of Vṛndāvana. Govinda never leaves Vṛndāvana. His body elsewhere is artificial. There is no doubt about it. I worship that Nanda's son who is easily accessible to the women in Vraja, but

difficult to be reached by those who desire salvation. The hymn is the great lustre of his nails.

Pārvatī said:

63. As long as the female imp in the form of the desire for salvation or enjoyment is present in the heart, how can, till then, the delight of love rise there?

The lord said:

64-65. O good one, you have asked well. I shall tell all that there is in my mind. Listen attentively. (A devotee) remembers his virtues, his name, songs pleasing the mind; enlightens himself, and always is merged in (his) love.*

CHAPTER SEVENTYEIGHT

Worship Prescribed for a Devotee of Viṣṇu

Pārvatī said:

1. Tell me the correct way of life of the followers of Viṣṇu, practising which all men will cross the ocean of worldly existence.

The lord said:

2-9. Here the purification of the devotees of Viṣṇu is said to be in twelve ways: Smearing the house, similarly approaching Hari (i.e. Viṣṇu), going round (his idol) with devotion, (lead to) purification of the feet. Taking leaves and flowers with devotion only for the worship of Hari (leads to the purification) of the hands. This purification is the most important of all purifications. Narration of the names, so also of the virtues of god Śrīkṛṣṇa with devotion, is said to cause the purification of speech. Listening to his account, and witnessing his festival—this is said (to lead to) the proper purification of the ears and eyes. Putting on one's head the water (used for washing the idol's) feet, the flowers that had been offered (to the idol), and the garlands (offered to

*Some verses of this charter like 41, 44ff. are not quite clear. Some, e.g. 52b ff. seem to be irrelevant.

the deity) is said to cause the purification of the head of him who has bowed down before Hari. O dear one, smelling the flowers etc. offered to him (leads to) the purification of the heart, and it is laid down as causing the purification of the nose also. That (place) alone, where there are flowers (and other objects) offered at the couple of feet of Kṛṣṇa, is purifying in the world, and that (alone) would purify everything.

10-11. Worship (of Kṛṣṇa) is said to be of five kinds. Listen from me (i.e. as I tell) the difference in them. I shall, in proper order, describe to you the worship of five kinds, viz. *Abhigamana*, *Upādāna*, *Yoga*, *Svādhyāya* and *Ijyā*. The real approach (to the deity consists in) cleansing the place of the deity, smearing it and removing the flowers that were offered to it.

12a. *Upādāna* (i.e. acquisition) is the collection of sandal, flowers etc.

12b. *Yoga* (i.e. union) is the thought that the deity of one (i.e. worshipped by one) is oneself (only).

13-14a. *Svādhyāya* (i.e. self-study) consists in muttering (the deity's name) with the scrutiny of the meaning of the hymn, reciting Vedic hymns and hymns of praise (of a deity), so also the narration of (the virtues etc. of) Hari. *Svādhyāya* is also said to be study of branches of knowledge about the (final) truth etc.

14b-16a. *Ijyā* (i.e. worship) is properly worshipping one's deity. O you of a good vow, I have thus told you the worship of five kinds. According to the occasion I shall in due order tell you about (the worship) that gives equality with the deity, nearness of the deity, residence in the same heaven with the deity, intimate union with the deity, and assimilation to the deity. (I shall also tell you about) the worship of the Śālagrāma stone.

16b-27. In the hands of Keśava having four hands, are held, in order, a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus beginning with the right hand, then the upper hand (etc.). The mace-holder is called Keśava. Nārāyaṇa is he who in due order holds the weapons viz. a lotus, a mace, a disc and a conch. Mādhava would be (he who holds), in order, a disc, a conch, a lotus and a mace (in his hands beginning with the right hand, then the

upper one...). The mace-holder called Govinda holds a mace, a lotus, a conch and a disc. My salutation to you, of the form of Viṣṇu, holding a lotus, a conch, a disc and a mace. My salutation (to you) of the form of Madhusūdana, possessing a conch, a lotus, a mace and a disc. My salutation to Trivikrama having a mace, a disc, a conch and a lotus. My salutation (to you) of the form of Vāmana having a disc, the Kaumodakī (mace), a lotus and a conch. My salutation (to you) of the form of Śrīdhara, having a disc, a lotus, a conch and a mace. Salutation to you, O Hṛṣīkeśa, having a disc, a mace, a conch and a lotus. Salutation to your own form of Padmanābha, having a lotus, a conch, a mace and a disc. Salutation to Saṁkarṣaṇa, having a conch, a lotus, a disc and a mace. O Vāsudeva, salutation to you having a disc, a conch, a mace and a lotus. Salutation to him who has taken the form of Pradyumna, having a conch, a disc, a mace, and a lotus. Salutation to the form of Puruṣottama having a lotus, a conch, a mace and a disc. Salutation to (you having) the form of Adhokṣaja having a mace, a conch, a disc and a lotus. Salutation (to you) of the form of Nṛsiṁha holding a lotus, a mace, a conch and a disc. Salutation (to you) of the form of Acyuta having a lotus, a disc, a conch and a mace. Salutation (to you) of the form of Śrīkṛṣṇa having a mace, a lotus, a disc and a conch.

28-43. That is god Śrī Gadādhara who is present in the aperture of Śālagrāma stone, who holds two discs, who has white lines and who is rich in beauty. That is Puṣkala, the forepart, with two discs present and of a red lustre. There is Saṁkarṣaṇa, so also is Pradyumna. The one having small discs is Pītaka. The round one that is having a long hollow and holes is Aniruddha. The dark one, dark-blue at the aperture and having three lines, is Nārāyaṇa. Nṛsiṁha is the one having the lines of the form of a mace, and having a very tall navel-lotus; he has a big disc. One having three dots is Kapila. (This one) or one having five dots is Kapila. (This one) or one having five dots should be worshipped by a celibate. That is Varāha that has three marks and two uneven circles. Nīla has three lines, is having dots, and is big. That is the form of the tortoise. The dark one having circles and eddies, is whitish and

has the backside preserved. Śrīdhara has five lines. Vanamālin is marked with a mace. Vāmana is round; one having a disc in the centre is Nīlaka. Anantaka is the one that has many colours, many forms and the hood of a serpent. Dark and corpulent is Dāmodara. The one having a circle in the centre is Nīlaka. May he, of a contracting aperature, protect (me). So also Brahmā, the very red one. The one having a very long line is Suṣira; Pṛthu is the one having a disc and a lotus. Kṛṣṇa has a big disc and a large hole. Bindumān has a dot. Hayagrīva has the form of a goad. One having five lines is Kaustubha. Vaikuṇṭha shines spotless. The black one, having one disc, is like the shape of a long lotus, is having a long lotus, is having a long line, and whitish is Matsya. Rāmacandra has vertical lines. That one that is dark, is Trivikrama. Salvation to him, staying in the Śālagrāma-Dvārakā, who, marked with one, and having a mace and looking charming, should protect (me). With two (are formed) Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa; with three Trivikrama. With four, the four modes. With five, Vāsudeva (is formed). May Pradyumna, with six, and Saṁkarṣaṇa with seven, protect (me). Puruṣottama would be (formed) with eight; the one with nine modes is placed as new. May Anirundha, having the ten incarnations and with ten, protect (me). The one with twelve souls, with twelve (may protect me). Anantaka has more than this (number). Brahmā has four faces, a staff, a water-pitcher and a garland and is tall. Maheśvara has five faces, ten arms and is bull-bannered, and has respective weapons.

44. The mother are Gaurī, Caṇḍikā, Sarasvatī and Mahālakṣmī. Divākara has a lotus in his hand.

45-46. The attendants like Gajāsya, Gajaskandha, Ṣaṇmukha are of many kinds. They are there, or are installed and if they are worshipped in a palace, a man obtains *Dharma*, *Artha* and *Kāma*.

CHAPTER SEVENTYNINE

Do's and Don't's for a Devotee af Viṣṇu

The lord said:

1-2. Not only in the house (but everywhere) the worship of Hari should be done everyday on the Śālagrāma, a gem, a mystical diagram or images. In one region of Gaṇḍakī there is a great place of Śālagrāma (i.e. where Śālagrāma stones are found). May the stone found there protect. This is the case.

3-5a. By the touch of the Śālagrāma stone, the destruction of sins committed during crores of existences takes place. Then (what can be said) about Viṣṇu's worship there? It is the cause of (being in) the vicinity of Hari. One would obtain the fruit of worshipping a hundred liṅgas. If one would obtain a black stone (i.e. Śālagrāma) having a mark of a cow's foot, as a result of religious merit of many existences, then (the mission of) one's life is accomplished.

5b-11. First one should examine a glossy, excellent, black stone. One that is slightly black is said to be mediocre. A mixed one always gives a mixed fruit. As the fire always present in wood is manifested by friction, in the same way the (all-)pervading Hari is felt in a Śālagrāma. He who everyday would worship twelve Śālagrāma stones from Dvāravatī, is honoured in Vaikuṇṭha. (If) a man observes an aperture on the Śālagrāma stone, his dead ancestors live contentedly in heaven till the end of the world. There is the residence in the form of Vaikuṇṭha, where there is the Dvāravatī stone. A man dying (here) goes to the city of Viṣṇu. That sacred place spreads over three yojanas. Everything (like) muttering, worship, sacrifice (performed there) would be crorefold meritorious. Over the area of one krośa, whatever is desired (is obtained). There is no doubt about this, since, even an insect dying here goes to Vaikuṇṭha.

12-15. The man who fixes a price on the Śālagrāma stone, so also who sells it, and he who gives consent (to the deal), so also he who sanctions its examination—all these go to hell till the sun (shines in the sky) and till deluge. Therefore, O respectable lady, one should avoid the purchase and sale of the

(Śālagrāma with a) disc. There is no doubt that salvation takes place there where there is the union of the deity in Śālagrāma and the one born in Dvārakā. The one produced in Dvārakā, endowed with a disc, marked with many discs of the shape of a stone having a round seat, is of the form of Brahman and unstained.

16-21a. Salutation to (you) of the form of Oṁkāra and of the form of constant joy; O glorious Śālagrāma, favour me, (your) devotee, who desires your grace and is stricken by death. Hereafter I shall gladly tell you the manner (in which) the dot (or mark is put), hearing which all men would obtain assimilation to Viṣṇu. (A man) should have Keśava (i.e. take Keśava to be present) in the forehead, Śrī Puruṣottama in the neck, god Nārāyaṇa in the navel, Vaikuṇṭha (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the heart, Dāmodara in the left side, and Trivikrama in the right, Hṛṣīkeśa in the head, and Padmanābha at the back, Yamunā and Gaṅgā in the ears, and Kṛṣṇa and Hari in the arms. (These) twelve deities are said to be pleased in their respective places.

21b-25. When a dot (i.e. a mark) is put he should recite these names. He, with all his sins purified, goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. He, even though he is a cāṇḍāla, on whose forehead an upright line is seen, is of a pure heart, and deserves to be honoured. There is no doubt about it. One should not look at a man on whose forehead an upright mark is not seen; (and) on seeing him one should look at the Sun. On seeing or touching a brāhmaṇa on whose forehead a mark with three lines or an upright mark is not seen, one should bathe with one's clothes on. One should put a mark of the form of Viṣṇu's foot, keeping space between (the toes).

26. On the head of that mean brāhmaṇa who would not put an upright mark, there is always the foot of a dog (placed on it). There is no doubt about this.

27-29. One should know that a very auspicious upright mark starting from the nose and ending with the hair, and having a hole (i.e. space) in between, is the temple of Viṣṇu. One should know that Brahmā has settled on the left side, Sadāśiva on the right, and Viṣṇu in the middle. Therefore, one should not besmear (i.e. cover) the middle (part). The glorious one who, after

looking into a mirror or into water puts the upright mark, goes to the highest position.

30-33a. Fire, Water, the Vedas, and the Moon and the Sun, so also Wind, always remain in the right ear of a brāhmaṇa. Gaṅgā also remains in the right ear, and Fire in the nose. By touching both (these), one is purified at that moment only. Having put water in a conch and having mixed it with Tulasī, one should give it to the noble devotees of Viṣṇu, drink it, and salute (them) with the head (bent down). One should drink it and sprinkle one's body, one's son, friend and wife with it.

33b-36a. The water (flowing) from Viṣṇu's feet, when drunk, destroys sins (committed) in crores of existences. The sin becomes eightfold on dropping (even) a drop on the ground. He who, holding a conch full of water in his hand, praises (the deity) and goes round (it), always holds the water, has obtained the fruit of his existence. He in whose house there is neither a conch nor a bell with the (form of the) eagle on it before (the image of) Vāsudeva, is not a follower of the lord (i.e. Viṣṇu) in the Kali age.

36b-45. (Going) to the lord's temple in vehicles, or with sandals on, or drinking spirituous liquor there, not (offering) service in the festivals of the deity, not saluting before (the image of) him, or saluting the lord with the remains of food on the hands etc. not washed, or when impure, saluting the lord with (only) one hand, or spreading the feet before him towards the south, or enjoying a bed before him, or lying (in front of him), or eating, or telling lies, or talking loudly, or talking to one another, crying and quarrelling, curbing or favouring, talking cruelly to women, covering with one garment (only), censuring or praising others, speaking obscene words, breaking wind, behaving badly with an inferior because of having power, eating without (first) offering (the food) to the deity, not offering (to the deity) fruits etc. produced during the season, giving the remains after use of a seasoned article etc., eating (food) after making it distinctly visible, censuring and praising others, keeping mum before the preceptor (i.e. not talking to him), praising himself, censuring deities—these are said to be thirtytwo offences against Viṣṇu: "O Madhusūdana, day and night I commit thousands of offences. Thinking me to be yours, foregive me."

46-47. Uttering this prayer he should salute (the deity prostrating) on the ground like a staff. Hari always forgives thousands of offences. Similarly the brāhmaṇas should eat in the evening and in the morning whatever food is left over by Viṣṇu's devotee. (Such a person) is freed from the sins committed during the day.

48-57a. Uttering me (i.e. my i.e. Śiva's name) and thinking 'food is Brahmā, and sauce is Viṣṇu', he who eats (food) is never covered by the faults of the food. A man who is a devotee of Viṣṇu should not eat a round bottle-gourd, masura-beans with their skin on, the white nut of the palmyra tree, egg-plant; (similarly) a man who is Viṣṇu's devotee should not eat on the leaves of a bunyan tree, aśvattha or arka tree, or a kovidāra or kadamba. In (the month of) Śrāvaṇa he should avoid vegetables; he should forgo curd in Bhādrapada. In the month of Āśvina he should avoid milk and should give up (eating) flesh in Kārtika. (He should) also (avoid) burnt food, citron, and whatever is not offered to Viṣṇu, so also common citron, vegetables and visible salt. If by chance he would eat (any one of these), he should remember his (i.e. Viṣṇu's) name. Haimantika (a kind of rice), grains anointed with sugar, mudga sesamum, barley, kalāpaka (a kind of grass), kaṅgu, wild rice, vegetable, Enhydra Hingcha, kāla vegetable, vāstūka (a kind of vegetable), radish other than red, rock-salt and ocean-salt, curd and ghee obtained from a cow, milk from which water is not taken out, jack-fruit, green vegetable, Piper Longum, cumin-seeds, so also oranges and tamarind, plantain, lavali (a kind of creeper), Dhātrī, jaggery from any other object than sugarcane, that (food) which is not cooked in oil—the sages describe these as food for offering.

57b-59a. One should know even him who has flowers along with Tulasī-leaves etc., to be Viṣṇu. This is the truth (and) truth (only). There is no doubt about it. By planting Dhātrī-tree a man would be equal to Viṣṇu. One should know that the area round about it to the extent of three hundred cubits is Kurukṣetra.

59b-65. Having put round his neck a garland made with (pieces of) Tulasī-wood having the shape of rudrākṣa, a man should start the worship (of Viṣṇu). Similarly, the worshipper of Viṣṇu should carefully wear round his neck a garland of

āmalakas, or a good garland of lotuses, or that of kadamba-flowers; he should also put on his head flowers taken off after being offered (to Viṣṇu) and Tulasī-mālā. He should mark his body with flowers Taken off after being offered and sandal, with (the accompaniment of) his epithets. He should put (the mark of) a mace on his forehead, and (the marks of) a bow and an arrow. On the chest (he should put the mark of) the Nandaka (sword), and (the marks of) a conch and a disc on both the arms. If a brāhmaṇa endowed with (the marks) of a conch and a disc dies on the cremation ground, he certainly gets the same (highest) position which is said (to be obtained by dying) at Prayāga. He who being devoted to Viṣṇu, puts a Tulasī-leaf on his head, performs all his deeds, obtains an inexhaustible fruit.

66-68. The rites performed in honour of the dead ancestors and deities by one decorated with Tulasī-garlands, become a crorefold meritorious. The sin of that man who devoutly wears a garland made of Tulasī-wood, after offering it to Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), perishes. Having worshipped (Viṣṇu) with water for washing the feet etc. he should utter this prayer: "Salutation to that Tulasī which, when seen, destroys the multitude of all sins; which, when touched, purifies the body; which, when saluted, removes diseases; which, when sprinkled, frightens Yama; which, when planted, bestows the vicinity of lord Kṛṣṇa; (and) when placed at his feet, gives the fruit (in the form) of salvation.

CHAPTER EIGHTY

Monthwise Rites Prescribed for a Viṣṇu Devotee

Pārvatī said:

1-2a. Then, how does (a man) survive, when the terrible Kali age, full of the alligators in the form of objects of senses, and having the distress in the form of a son, a wife and wealth,

has arrived, O lord? O great god, O treasure of kindness, tell the remedy for it.

The lord said:

2b-8. Kali does not harass them who always utter the name of Hari and Hari only, or the auspicious (utterance) 'Hare Rāma, Hare Kṛṣṇa' or 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa'. Doing (his) deeds one after another, a man should remember (Viṣṇu's) epithets. He repeatedly says, 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa'. He should also use your name and my name with inversion. He too would be free from sin as fire (goes away) from a heap of cotton. He who mutters my auspicious name with your name as 'Victory to the First One', or preceded by the word 'Śrī', is freed from the worldly existence. He should remember it by day, at night, in the evening—at all times. He, remembering Rāma day and night, sees Kṛṣṇa with his eyes. He being pure or impure, just by remembering always and at all times, (Viṣṇu's) name, is, just at that moment, freed from the worldly existence.

9-12. (Uttering) the name removes the sin of even him who is having many offences. In the Kali age a sacrifice, a vow, penance or charity is not complete in all parts. This couple—bath in Gaṅgā and Viṣṇu's name—is free from evil. O auspicious lady, horrible thousand sins connected with killing, (sin due to) cohabiting with crores of wives of preceptors, thefts and other (sins) do not take place due to the name 'Govinda' dear to Hari. He who is impure or pure or who is reduced to every condition, who remembers (Viṣṇu) of lotus-like eyes, is pure from within and without.

13-20a. By remembering his name or by reflecting on his feet he should start worshipping him by fashioning his image with gold, silver, flour or of the shape of a garland marked with his feet. He bears (the mark of) a disc at the root of his right thumb. He causes the end of the worldly existence of the man who bows there. Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu) bears a very beautiful mark of a lotus at the root of the middle finger, which attracts the bees in the form of the hearts of those who meditate (upon Viṣṇu).| Below the lotus he bears (the mark of) a flag, which is the victory-flag of all calamities. At the root of the small finger is the mark (like a diamond-pin) that breaks (i.e. destroys) the

stream of the sins of a devotee. In the side is a goad, the cause of joy in the devotee's heart. At the joint of the thumb he bears (the mark of) a barley-corn which is full of pleasures and riches. At the root (of the thumb) there is (the mark of) a mace breaking the mountain of sins of all men. The unborn lord also bears marks like lotuses etc. on the right (foot) to illumine all knowledge. The treasure of kindness would stand on the left foot and has (these marks).

20b-40a. Therefore, he who would always listen to or narrate the greatness of Govinda, which is charming due to the relish of joy, is fully free. There is no doubt about it. I shall (now) tell the rites (to be performed) in (different) months, which give delight to Viṣṇu. In Jyeṣṭha, one, being pure, should carefully bathe Śrī Viṣṇu. On the full-moon day (when this is done), daily sins, sins committed during the fortnight, the month, the season and the year, so also thousands (of sins like) killing a brāhmaṇa, those committed knowingly or unknowingly, (sins like) stealing gold, drinking liquor, violating the teacher's bed (i.e. wife), so also thousands of crores of minor sins—all these perish. One should sprinkle (the idol of) Acyuta on (its) head with water from a pitcher to the accompaniment of the hymn (called) *Puruṣasūkta* or (the group called) *Pāvamānī* hymns. (Or one should sprinkle the idol) with coconut water, or water from the tāla fruit, or fragrant water with gems put into it or water offered with flowers. Having propitiated (Viṣṇu) with the five articles of worship, according to (one's) expanse of wealth, one should offer the musical instrument viz. bell, saying, 'Gham, salutation to Ghaṇṭā'. 'I am fallen into the heat of sins put along the great path'. 'Protect me, a sinner—falling into the ocean of the terrible mundane existence'. A learned brāhmaṇa, pure and wise, who does like this, is freed from all sins, and he goes to Viṣṇu's heaven. One should celebrate the great festival of (Viṣṇu's going to) sleep on the eleventh day of the bright half of Āṣāḍha. In Āṣāḍha one should take out (Viṣṇu's) chariot (in procession). In Śrāvaṇa one should perform the ceremony called Śrāvaṇa-vidhi (performed on the full-moon day). He should be intent on a fast on (Viṣṇu's) birthday in Bhādrapada. In the month of Āśvina, one should perform the ceremony of (Viṣṇu's) turning to another side. One

should (also) perform (the ceremony of) Śrī Hari's getting up. Otherwise he will be a traitor to Viṣṇu. In the auspicious Āśvina month one should worship the golden or silver (idol of) Mahāmāyā of the form of Viṣṇu, without making an oblation. A religious-minded worshipper of Viṣṇu should not indulge in killing or hating (anyone). In the months of Kārtika and Pauṣa one should perform (deeds of) religious merit according to his desire. One should also offer a lamp (kept) on a high place to Dāmodara. The lamp should be of the size of four fingers and should have seven wicks. At the end of the fortnight one should arrange an auspicious row of lamps. In the bright half of Mārgaśīrṣa, on the sixth day, one should, with (i.e. having put on) white garments, worship the lord of the world, particularly Brahmā. In Pauṣa one should sprinkle (water over the idol) with flowers. One should avoid loose sandal(-paste). On the Saṁkrānti day and in the month of Māgha one should make an offering of food made from fragrant rice to Viṣṇu, and should recite this prayer. One should also feed brāhmaṇas residing in the city of the god of gods. One should (also) honour Viṣṇu's devotees and brāhmaṇas looking upon them as the lord. When one devotee is fed, a crore of them are fed. Merely by feeding brāhmaṇas a deficient (deed) certainly becomes complete.

40b-45a. On the fifth day in the bright fortnight one should bathe (the idol of) Keśava, worship it duly with fruits and powders, along with young leaves of mango trees, and with fine, fragrant garments. The house should be (rendered) charming, should be bright and illumined with lights. It should have grapes, sugarcanes, plantain-trees, jambīra, nāgaraṅga, nut-trees, coconuts, dhātrī, jackfruits, and green vegetables. (It should be decorated) with portions of other trees, with flowers of all seasons, with other various fruits and flowers, with canopies, with abundant flowers and pitchers full of water, with branches and twigs of mango-trees and with umbrellas and chowries.

45b-57a. The festival of the swing is laid down after remembering (Kṛṣṇa) with the words 'Victory to Kṛṣṇa' and after going round (the idol)—especially in the Kali age (it is celebrated) on the fourteenth day in Phālguna (at the time) called Yāma. Or one should devoutly and duly worship (the idol) with four kinds

of powders of figs on the full-moon day on the first day at a time called sandhi. One should please the highest lord with white and red (articles), white and yellow (articles), and (articles) mixed with camphor etc.; so also with (articles) having lovely colour and form due to the colour of turmeric. Or one should please the highest lord with (articles) having other colours and forms. One should start (the festival) on the eleventh day and finish it on the fifth day. The swing-festival is laid down (to last for) five days or three days. Men, seeing Kṛṣṇa facing the south and swinging, get free from heaps of sins. There is no doubt about it. A man should, in the month of Caitra, put the deity rising from (i.e. present in) Śālagrāma, in a pot containing water or in a golden, silver, copper or earthen vessel and should worship him while (the idol) is in water. Or, O magnanimous one, he should worship his image. His religious merit cannot be measured. Having planted the damana (tree), he should offer (the leaves of) it to Śrī Viṣṇu. He should offer it in Vaiśākha or Śrāvaṇa or Bhādrapada. While offering damana etc. he should do so in the foremost sheltered place; otherwise it is fruitless. On the third day of Vaiśākha he should get fashioned (the idol of Viṣṇu) especially in water or in a circle or in a pavilion in a big grove. Day by day he should nourish it well with fragrant sandal. With care as he can bestow, he should do it, which gives nourishment.

57b-66. They recognise these things to be Viṣṇu's Gandhāṣṭaka 'eight fragrances'—sandal, agaru (a kind of sandal), hrībera, black saffron, rocanā (a kind of yellow pigment), jaṭāmāṁsī (a kind of black pigment), murā. With these particular (articles) he should smear the body (i.e. the idol) of Viṣṇu. Rubbed Tulasī-wood with camphor and agaru or used with filaments of flowers is called haricandana. The men who, at the time of pilgrimage, see Kṛṣṇa (i.e. his idol) with devotion, are not reborn even after hundreds of crores of kalpas, (so also those) who put (i.e. bathe the idol with) water mixed with fragrant articles. Or having gone to Vṛndāvana, having put in the midst of flowers (the idol of) the lord of the world, and having decorated (it), he should make a worthy devotee of Viṣṇu enjoy (all) that fully. He should pluck a coconut or the seed-vessel of a lotus and offer it (to the deity), so also jujube fruit, bread-fruit, after removing the cover.

He should also cause to be offered food mixed with curd, after dipping it into ghee. He should also cause to be offered cooked flour, cake with ghee, so also ripe fruit with oil mixed with sesamum (-seeds). He should give whatever is dear to himself. Having offered (an article) he should never take it back; especially that which is intended for Viṣṇu and given to his devotees.

67-69. O Mahesvarī, O Pārvatī, I have told you something in brief. You should protect it like your own vulva. When there is this section (giving) instruction in the class of sacred texts describing the form and virtues of Śrīkṛṣṇa, enough of other texts. When the (devotee's) mind is (fixed) on the necklace of love (for him), interest (in him), devotion (to him) and his sports and names, what is the use of beautiful women? With heart worship that lord of the children in Vraja, the ground of Vṛndāvana, water of Yamunā; a body smeared with dust of the lotus-like feet of the lord of the world (is better than one smeared with) agaru, sandal etc. which are indeed vain.

CHAPTER EIGHTYONE

Mantracintāmaṇi for Devotees of Kṛṣṇa

The sages said:

1-3. O Sūta, O good one, live long. You have disclosed the nectar of the deeds of Śrīkṛṣṇa, which emancipates all devotees from the mundane existence. O lord, tell (us) all the daily sports of Śrīkṛṣṇa, on hearing which devotion to Kṛṣṇa increases, O good man. O glorious one, tell us separately the application and characteristic of the prayer of the teacher and the disciple; for, you are our great friend.

Sūta said:

4. Once Nārada saluted and said to the lord of the world, the god of gods, Sadāśiva, seated on the bank of Yamunā.

Nārada said:

5-10. O god of gods, O great god, O omniscient one, O lord of the world, O you who know the truth about the characteristics of the lord, O you best among those who know the prayers of (i.e. addressed to) Kṛṣṇa, I secured great prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa from you and from my father. Those best prayers and others have been properly learnt by me eating vegetables, roots and fruits for many thousand years, subsisting on dry leaves, water, air etc. or (sometimes) not eating (at all), avoiding looking at and talking to women, conquering the six qualities like lust, curbing the external organs. Even though this was done, O Śaṅkara, my mind was not pleased. Therefore, O lord, tell me that which would succeed even without purificatory rites etc., and which gives an excellent fruit just by uttering it even once. O lord of gods, if (you think) I am fit, then please tell it to me.

Śiva said:

11-16. O glorious one, you, desiring the welfare of the world, have asked well. I shall tell you the prayer—the gem yielding all desires, though it is to be well (i.e. carefully) protected. This is the secret of secrets and the excellent secret of secrets. I have never before told it to the goddess (i.e. Pārvatī) nor to your elder brothers. I shall tell you the excellent pair of prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa. The pair is called *Mantracintāmaṇi*—the desire-yielding gem. There are alternatives to this prayer—so also the five-syllabled (prayer). Beginning with (the words) 'Gopījana' and ending with 'Vallabha' and 'I seek the refuge' —This is the five-lettered (prayer). The great prayer of sixteen letters is called the *Mantracintāmaṇi*. Saying 'Gopījana' first, he should then say 'Vallabhābhyām'. The prayer having two lines is said to be (having) ten letters.

17-22. Having internally repeated with or without faith, (just) once, he would go to the proximity of those dear to Kṛṣṇa. There is no doubt about this. For him there is no (need for) the consideration for an initiatory rite, no (need for) the order of rite of nyāsa, no restriction about place or time, no requital of an enemy or a friend etc. O best sage, all are entitled

to it (even) up to a cāṇḍāla. So also women, śūdra and others, the dull, the dumb and the lame. Others (like) the Hūṇas, Kirātas, Pulindas and Puṣkaras, Ābhīras, Yavanas, Kaṅkas, Khasa and others, so also other low-born ones, those having much religious hypocrisy and egotism, those given to wickedness, killers of cows and brāhmaṇas, those having (committed) major and minor sins, those without knowledge and detachment, those without learning etc.—these and others—all are entitled to the prayer.

23-25. O best sage, if these have devotion to Kṛṣṇa, the god of all gods, then all of them are entitled; not otherwise. A performer of sacrifices, one engaged in giving gifts, one practising all regular orders of ceremonies and rites, one who speaks the truth, or an ascetic, master of Vedas and Vedāṅgas, one intent upon the contemplation of the Supreme Being, one born in a noble family, one practising austerities, one engaged in vows—is not entitled to this (hymn) if he does not have devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

26-28a. Therefore, it should not be told to him who is not a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, who is ungrateful, who is proud, who is faithless, and who is an atheist; so also it should not be told to him who is not desirous of attending, or to him who does not serve Śiva. This (prayer) should be carefully given to him who is a devotee of Kṛṣṇa only, free from religious hypocrisy and greed, free from lust and anger.

28b-33. I am the inspired poet (i.e. the author) of it, and its metre is said to be Gāyatrī. The lover of the cowherdesses (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) is said to be the deity of this hymn. Its application is said to be to the service of Hari with his beloved. A man should employ the five modes (of devotion) beginning with the disc etc. and hymns also, or he should practise the assignment of the hands and body with the mystical letter forming its essential part. The first letter of the hymn is decorated at the top with a dot. The mystical letter would be 'gem' here, and the power is said to be 'namaḥ'. In the last syllable there are ten parts, and worship is to be done with them, so also with sandal and flowers, with water in their absence. It should be done (i.e. muttered) after first doing the assignment of the various parts

of the body to different deities for pleasing Hari. Therefore, only others tell the nyāsa etc. of this hymn.

34-35a. Even if it is recited once it bestows blessedness. Yet one should always assign in ten ways for the muttered (hymn) etc. O best brāhmaṇa, now I shall explain (to you) the meditation of this prayer:

35b-43. (A man) should remember Kṛṣṇa seated, along with his beloved, on a throne in Vṛndāraṇya—Kṛṣṇa, who has put on a yellow garment, who is dark like a cloud, who has two arms, who has put on a garland of sylvan (flowers), who has a chaplet made of peacocks' tail-feathers, whose face resembles a crore of moons, whose eyes are rolling about; who has a karṇikāra (flower) as the ear-ornament, who has a round dot put on the centre of his forehead which is all around (smeared) with sandal, who is shining with ear-rings resembling the young sun, whose cheeks are like mirrors as they are glittering with drops of perspiration, whose eyes are rivetted on his beloved's face, who has sportively raised his brow due to a side-glance, whose very high nose is shining due to pearls put on its top, whose lips like ripe bimba fruits are shining by means of the moonlight (shooting) from his teeth, whose hands are shining with ornaments worn on the upper arms, with armlets and rings set with good (i.e. bright) gems, who holds in his left hand a flute, so also a lotus, whose waist is shining with a girdle and a chaplet, whose feet are glittering due to anklets, who is agile in the flurry caused by the joy due to love-sports, whose eyes are unsteady, who is laughing with his beloved and who is repeatedly making her laugh (thus he should remember Kṛṣṇa).

44-52a. Then he should remember Rādhikā who is seated to his left side, who has put on a blue bodice, whose lustre is like heated gold, whose lotus-like, very smiling face is half covered with the end of her garment, who has fixed her eyes on the face of her lover, whose eyes are unsteady like those of a cakorī, who is putting with her thumb and fore-finger a nut along with a (betal) leaf and powder into her lover's mouth, whose lovely, plump and elevated breasts are glittering due to a necklace of pearls, who has a slender waist, whose buttocks are large and are adorned with a mass of small bells, who has put on large jewelled ear-rings, armlets, rings and bracelets, who has

put on a jingling string, anklets and jewelled foot-rings, whose body is bewitching due to her being an essence of beauty, who is beautiful in all limbs, who is submerged in the water of joy, who is pleased, who has fresh youth. O best of brāhmaṇas, there also are her friends who are of the same age and have the same qualities, and would be engaged in serving her with chowries and fans. Now, O Nārada, I shall tell you the meaning of the prayer; listen to it. Rādhikā, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa is called Gopī due to her being concealed by the external parts of the manifestation (of the world), her own parts like the powers of illusion etc., so also with the internal parts, always present, like intelligence etc.

52b-56a. The goddess, full of Kṛṣṇa, and the highest deity is called Rādhikā. She is of the nature of all beauty and of the nature of Kṛṣṇa's joy. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, she is called Hlādinī by the wise. Durgā and others having the three constituents (like Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas) are a part of the croreth portion of her. She is actually Mahālakṣmī, and Kṛṣṇa is lord Nārāyaṇa. O best sage, there is not the slightest difference between the two. She is Durgā (i.e. Pārvatī); Hari is Rudra. Kṛṣṇa is Indra; she is Indrāṇī. She is Sāvitrī; Hari is Brahmā. She is Dhūmorṇā; Hari is Yama.

56b-60a. O best sage, what is the use of (speaking) much? There is nothing of the nature of living or non-living that is without them. The whole world is full of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. In this way, O Nārada, that all (this) is the splendour of the two. It is not possible for me to describe it even (if I do so) for hundreds of crores of years. In the three worlds the earth is venerable; Jambudvīpa is better than it. In it Bhārata country (is excellent); in it the city Mathurā (is the best). In it the (grove) named Vṛndāvana (is excellent); in it the group of Rādhā's friends is excellent. In it Rādhikā is the best.

60b-66. Due to her proximity, superiority in successions of the earth etc. would be there. Nothing else is lofty here. This is that Rādhā. The cowherdesses are the group of her friends. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are dear chiefs of the lives of the group of her friends. In this world, their feet should be sought for refuge. I go to them, have gone to them; I the soul that is very much afflicted, have sought their refuge; whatever is mine is his. All (I offer) to them, is for

them; it is to be enjoyed by them; it is not mine. O brāhmaṇa, this in brief is told (as) the meaning of the prayer. I have told the five alternatives as: the meaning of the couplet, nyāsa, reaching them and taking shelter of them, offering oneself. This hymn alone should be carefully reflected upon day and night.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTWO

The Greatness of Vṛndāvana

Śiva said:

1-4. O Nārada, I shall now accurately tell the rite of initiation. Listen to it. Even without doing it a man would be freed just by listening to it. The wise one, realising that all this world from Brahmā is evanescent, having experienced the threefold misery like that of the mind, and due to all pleasures being transitory, putting them on the side of (i.e. looking upon them as) misery, and being free from them, and being detached should think about the means of the cessation of the worldly existence. He should be very much satisfied to obtain highest happiness.

5-8. The very intelligent one knowing the wickedness of men, being very much afflicted, should, O brāhmaṇa, seek refuge of me, the great one. A teacher is said to be calm, free from jealousy, devoted to Kṛṣṇa, having no other aim (than reaching Kṛṣṇa), having no other means, having virtue, free from lust and greed, knowing the truth in the interest in Śrīkṛṣṇa, the best among those who know prayers (addressed) to Kṛṣṇa, always resorting and attached to prayers of (i.e. addressed to) Kṛṣṇa, always pure, teaching good ways of life, always prescribing good practices, following the tradition, full of compassion and detached.

9-10. A disciple is said to be one who has mostly these qualities and who is desirous of serving his teacher's feet, who is extremely devoted to his teacher, and who desires salvation. The actual service offered to him through love is said to be the

salvation of the Vaiṣṇavite by the wise knowing the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas.

11-18. Having resorted to the feet of one's teacher one should tell him one's account. He (i.e. the teacher) removing doubts, repeatedly instructing him, should, with a very much delighted heart, teach the other one (i.e. the disciple) who has bowed down to his feet, who is calm and who desires to serve his feet. O brāhmaṇa, on the left and right shoulder-blades he should draw, with sandal or clay, a conch and a disc. In the same way he should then draw, according to the rules, the upright mark on the forehead etc. Then he (i.e. the teacher) should indicate (i.e. whisper) the two prayers into his right ear. Then in proper order and properly he should tell him the meaning of the prayers. He should carefully give him a name along with the word *dāsa.* Then the wise one should affectionately feed the devotees of Viṣṇu. He should also honour his honourable teacher with garments, ornaments etc. O great sage, he should give all his possessions to the teacher or half their number. The poor ones should even remain after throwing down their bodies (i.e. should throw down their own bodies) for the teacher. The wise one who is consecrated with these five sacred rites, shares the service of Kṛṣṇa; not otherwise even for crores of kalpas.

19-21. The former learned ones have described these to be the five sacred rites: marking (the body with mark of a conch etc.), the upright mark, the prayer, taking up a name and the fifth one is sacrifice. Marking is (done) with a conch, a disc etc.; the upright mark is said to have a hole; name is connected with the word *dāsa*; the prayers are two. Sacrifice is the worship of the teacher and a devotee of Viṣṇu. I have told you these five great sacred rites.

22-24. O Nārada, I shall now tell you the duties of those who have taken refuge (with Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu), resorting to which men will go to Viṣṇu's abode in Kali (age). A wise one, having thus obtained the hymn from his teacher, and greatly devoted to his teacher, serving the teacher every day, would obtain his favour. Then he should learn the duties of the good, especially of those who have taken refuge (with Viṣṇu). He should always

gratify the devotees of Viṣṇu looking upon them as his own desired deity.

25-27. As women due to being the objects of enjoyment by lustful persons get beating and reproach, in the same way the wise ones should get the respective things of the devotees of Viṣṇu. They should never worry about worldly things or things in the next world. The worldly things always come according to the deeds done in the former (existence). In the same way Kṛṣṇa will bring about the things in the next world. Therefore, men should always give up (making) effort for them.

28-32. All expedients should be given up and Kṛṣṇa should be worshipped thinking oneself to be Kṛṣṇa. As a woman devoted to her husband and loving him, is afflicted when the lover has gone on a journey for a long time, and as she, desiring his company only, would always think about his qualities and sings and listens to them (i.e. qualities), so he should think of the qualities and sports of Śrīkṛṣṇa. It should never be adopted as a means (to reaching Kṛṣṇa). As the woman (devoted to her husband) kisses, embraces, and drinks with the corner of her eye, her husband looking upon him as her lover who has come after travelling for a long time, in the same way a devotee should serve Hari with adoration.

33-37. He (should) never seek the refuge of anyone else; he should never have any other means. Because of his having no other means he would have no other aim (than Viṣṇu). He should not worship any other deity; should not bow to or remember any other deity. He should never see or sing about or censure (any other deity). He should not eat what is left over by another person. He should not wear what is given up by another person. He should avoid talking to or saluting those who are not devotees of Viṣṇu. He should cover his ears and go. If he has power he should punish (the person censuring these deities). O brāhmaṇa, I think that he, resorting to the course of a cātaka till the body falls, should concentrate on the meaning of the two (hymns).

38-46. As a cātaka, when thirsty, abandons a lake, a river, a sea etc. and either dies or appeals to a cloud, in the same way a man should think about the means. He should always solicit his desired deity, saying 'You should be my recourse'. He should

always remain in (i.e seek) the favour of his deity, those belonging to the deity, and especially of the teacher also; and should avoid their disfavour. I who have sought their refuge once, will tell about their propitiousness. Thinking 'these two will emancipate me', he should have faith in them. "O lord(s), you who destroy the fear of him who has taken your refuge, are the saviour (of your devotee) from the worldly existence, and from friends, sons, home and family. Who I am, whatever I have in this and the next world, all that I have today dedicated to your feet. I am the abode of sins; I have given up the means; I have no (other) course; therefore, O lord, you alone are my recourse. O lover of Rādhikā, through my acts, mind and speech, I am yours. O Kṛṣṇa's beloved, I belong to you. You two only are my refuge. O you heaps and mines of compassion, I have sought your shelter. Favour (me) by (giving) me, the wicked and sinful one, (the opportunity) of serving (you)".

47-50a. Thus, muttering to himself these five verses, he, desiring their service, should quickly remain (thinking about Kṛṣṇa), O best sage. I have briefly described these external qualities. Now I shall describe the essential, internal quality of those who have sought refuge (with Kṛṣṇa). Having, with effort, resorted to the condition of the friend of Kṛṣṇa's beloved, he should carefully serve both of them day and night. I have told (you) the hymn, the constituents of it and (about) those who are entitled to it.

50b-59. I have described their duties, the fruit of the hymn (accruing) to them. O Nārada you (should) also do it. You will obtain their servantship (*dāsya*). O brāhmaṇa, here there is never a doubt about the (consequent) loss of one's authority (ego?). I have no doubt that Hari would grant his (servantship) to him who has but once sought his refuge, and who has appealed to him, saying, 'I am yours'. Now I shall tell you a great, wonderful secret which formerly I had heard from lord Kṛṣṇa himself. O best sage, I have told you the secret course of conduct. This is more secret than a secret; it has to be guarded carefully. Formerly, muttering this gem of a hymn and pondering over god Nārāyaṇa, I lived on the top of Kailāsa in a dense forest. Then the lord was pleased and appeared before me. "Choose a boon". When this was said (by him), I too opened my eyes and saw the

god with his wife and seated upon Garuḍa. Having saluted the lord of Kamalā, the giver of boons, I said to him: "O ocean of compassion, O highest god, I desire to see with my eyes that form of yours which gives great joy, which is the abode of joy, which is eternal, which is embodied, which is superior to everything (else), which is qualityless, actionless, calm, and which the wise know as Brahman."

60-64. Then, the glorious lord of Kamalā said to me who had sought his refuge: "Today you will see that form (of mine) which is desired in (i.e. by) your mind. Go to my Vṛndāvana, to the western bank of Yamunā." Saying so, the lord of the world vanished along with his beloved. Then I also came to the auspicious bank of Yamunā. There I saw Kṛṣṇa, the lord of all gods, who had put on the dress of a cowherd, who was lovely, who was of the age of a boy, who had properly put his charming left hand on the shoulder of his beloved, who was laughing and making her laugh in the group of the cowherdesses, who was bright like a glossy cloud, who is the abode of auspicious qualities.

65-73a. Then, having laughed, Kṛṣṇa, speaking (sweetly) like nectar, said to me: "O Rudra, having known your desire, I have appeared before you, since you have today seen this uncommon form of mine, which is the embodiment of spotless love that is solidified and of goodness, intelligence and joy (i.e. Brahman), which is (at the same time) formless, qualityless, (all-)pervading, actionless, and higher than the highest. The groups of the Upaniṣads describe this faultless form of mine only. Because my qualities have not sprung from the constituents of Prakṛti, and because of their being endless, and because of their not being effected, they call me the qualityless lord. O Maheśvara (i.e. Śiva), because this form of mine is not visible to the physical eyes, all the Vedas describe me to be formless. The wise ones also know me to be Brahman, as a part of the supreme spirit, because of my (all-)prevading nature. As I am not the agent of the visible world, they (also) call me actionless; since my portions through power of Māyā perform creation etc., I do not myself perform creation etc., O Śiva. O Mahādeva, I am overcome with the love of these cowherdesses. I do

not know any other act, even myself, O Nārada(?). Being influenced by her love, I always sport with her.

73b-79. Know this my beloved Rādhikā to be a great deity. Around her see her friends in hundreds and thousands. O Rudra, they are eternal as I having an eternal body. The cowherds, cows, cowherdesses and this my Vṛndāvana always (exist). All this is eternal, and full of the joy of intelligence. Know this called Ānandakanda ('the root of delight') to be my Vṛndāvana, merely by entering which a man would not again get into the worldly existence. The fool who, after having reached my grove, goes elsewhere, would be self-killer only. I have told the truth and the truth (only). I never leave Vṛndāvana and go anywhere else. With her I always live here only. O Rudra, I have thus told everything (I) had in mind. Tell me now, what else do you want to hear."

80-88. O best sage, then I said to the god: "Tell me the means by which you would be obtaind like this." Then the lord said to me: "O Rudra, you have spoken well. This is a very great secret, (and) it is to be guarded carefully. The man who has once sought our refuge, worships us, after giving up (other) means, as a cowherdess, comes to me, O lord of gods. He who has sought the refuge of the two of us, or only of my beloved, and serves us or her with unswerving devotion, comes to me. There is no doubt about it. O Maheśvara, he who has sought my refuge and of my beloved, undoubtedly comes to me. Thus I have told you. He who has but once sought (our) refuge and would say, 'I am yours', comes to me without any (other) means. There is no doubt about it. Therefore, with all efforts a man should seek the refuge of my beloved. O Rudra, having resorted to my beloved, you can impress me. I have told you this great secret. O Mahādeva, you have also to guard it carefully. You too, having resorted to this my beloved Rādhikā, and muttering this couple of hymns, always live in my abode."

Śiva said:

89-91. Having thus spoken, and having taught the great hymn, and sacred rites into my right ear, Kṛṣṇa, the treasure of compassion, disappeared along with attendants there only when I was looking (at him). Since then I have been constantly

here. I have fully told you all this. Now, O best brāhmaṇa, tell me what more you want to hear.

CHAPTER EIGHTYTHREE

Kṛṣṇa's Love Sports in Vṛndāvana

Nārada said:

1. O lord, O great one, you have told me whatever I had asked (for). Now I desire to know the excellent path of devotion.

Śiva said:

2-11. O brāhmaṇa, you, desiring the well-being of all the worlds, have asked well. I shall tell you the secret also. Listen as I (shall) tell it to you. O greatest sage, the maid-servants, friends, parents and beloveds of Hari live here. All of them are eternal and virtuous. As they are described in the Purāṇas (indulging) in open sports, in the same way they remain in sports on the Vṛndāvana ground. They always go from the grove to the cow-pen and come back. They, along with their friends, also graze the cows without any harm from the demons. Similarly people dear to him are proud of those having water-pitchers (the ascetics). With secret devotion they delight their beloved persons. A man should there look upon himself among them as one who is charming, who is endowed with beauty and youth, who is a young woman, who has the form of a young beautiful woman, who knows many crafts and arts, who is fit for Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment, who is averse to enjoyment though solicited by Kṛṣṇa, who is the follower of Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā and who is devoted to serving her, who loves Rādhikā even more than Kṛṣṇa, who, through love, day by day brings about the union of the two (i.e. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā), who is extremely happy due to the pleasure and joy of serving them. Thus looking upon oneself, one

should, beginning with the early part of the day till late night, offer service there.

Nārada said:

12. I desire to hear correctly the everyday sport of Hari. How can I mentally serve Hari without knowing his sport?

Śiva said:

13-14. O Nārada, I do not correctly know that sport. From here go to Vṛndādevī. She will tell you the sport. She, the attendant of Govinda, surrounded by the group of her friends, lives near Keśītīrtha, not far from here.

Sūta said:

15-16. Then the best sage Nārada, who was addressed like this, went round him, and being delighted, saluted him again and again and went to Vṛndāvana. Vṛndā too, seeing Nārada, repeatedly saluted him and asked the greatest sage, "How have you come here (i.e. what brings you here)?"

Nārada said:

17. I desire to hear from you (about) the daily life of Hari. O auspicious one, if I am fit, then tell it (to me) from the beginning.

Vṛndā said:

18-30. O Nārada, I shall also tell you the secret (since) you are a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. You too are not to disclose this great secret which is a greater secret than a secret (i.e. the greatest secret). In Vṛndāvana which is charming and adorned with fifty bowers, in a chamber with divine gems, in an arbour of the desire-yielding tree, the two embracing each other remain (in a) sleeping (position), though later they are awakened by birds obeying my orders. They have obtained great joy due to a close embrace and are afraid of its being disturbed. They do not at all desire to get up from the bed. Then they have to get up from their bed when awakened with various notes made on all sides and repeatedly by groups of sārikās and parrots etc. Seeing them

seated gladly on the bed, the friends enter (the bower) and offer the two service appropriate for that time. Then the two, having got up from the bed by the notes of sārikās, overcome with eagerness go to their respective houses. In the morning, Kṛṣṇa, awakened by his mother, quickly gets up, and having with Baladeva brushed his teeth and being allowed by his mother, goes, being surrounded by his friends, to the cowstall. O brāhmaṇa, Rādhā too, awakened by her friends, gets up from her bed, and having brushed her teeth would then smear her body with unctuous substances. Then she goes to the quandrangular for bath. There she is bathed by her friends. (Then) she would go to the chamber for decoration, and there her friends decorate her with ornaments and various divine fragrant flowers and unguents. Then when, with effort, her friends request her mother-in-law she is invited alongwith her friends by Yaśodā to cook good food.

Nārada said:

31. How is it, O goddess, that she is invited by Yaśodā to cook food, when there are foremost cooks like Rohiṇī?

Vṛndā said:

32-43. I have formerly heard from the mouth of Kātyāyanī that in olden days she was granted a boon by Durvāsas, O great sage. (The boon was:) "O respectable lady, the food which is cooked by you, would be, as a result of my favour, sweet and vying with nectar, and would in the same way promote long life of the eater (of it)." Therefore, Yaśodā, loving her son, everyday calls her thinking, 'my son, due to longing for sweet (food), would, (after eating it) live a long life.' Allowed by her mother-in-law, she, being delighted, would go to the house of Nanda. Going there with the multitude of her friends she cooks there also. Kṛṣṇa also, having milked the cows and having some others got milked by (other) men, comes home surrounded by his friends at the words (i.e. order) of his father. Having smeared his body with unctuous substances and having had shampooing and after being gladly bathed by servants, he puts on washed garments, a garland, and has his body smeared with sandal. With his neck and forehead shining due to the hair on

his head separated and tied at two places, with the hair reddened by the dot on the forehead resembling the moon, and shining, with his hands delightfully glittering with jewelled bracelets, armlets, and bracelets worn on the upper arm, with his chest shining due to a pearl necklace, having put on ear-rings resembling crocodiles, he, holding the hand of his friend, and being followed by Baladeva, would enter the dining hall, after being again and again called by his mother. Then, surrounded by his friends and brother, making them laugh by means of (anecdotes etc. causing) laughter, and himself laughing with them, he eats various kinds of food. Having thus eaten (food), having sipped (water), having rested on a cot for a while, and distributing and chewing the tāmbūla given by the servants, Kṛṣṇa, having put on the dress of a cowherd, with the flock of cows going ahead of him, followed on the path by all the residents of Vraja with love, having saluted his father and mother, and having sent back properly the host (following him) with a glance, would go to the forest.

44-52. Having entered the forest and having played there with his friends for a while, he then gladly sports there, in the forest by means of various pastimes. Then, having deceived all, and surrounded by two or three friends, he, being eager to see his beloved, would gladly go to the rendezvous. She too, who had come home, on seeing Kṛṣṇa, goes, after deceiving her elders, under the pretext of Sun-worship etc. or for collecting flowers, to the forest with a desire to meet her lover. Thus the two, having, after many efforts, met in the forest, gladly sport there for the (whole) day with various pastimes. Sometimes the two get upon a swing and are rocked to and fro by their friends. Sometimes, Hari, deceived by the bevies of his beloveds, is seen, searching his flute dropped from his hand, and hidden by his beloved. He, made to laugh by them by means of merriment, remains there. At times the two enter the forest endowed with vernal breezes, and sprinkle each other with water (mixed with) sandal, or with water (mixed with) saffron etc., released from syringes, or smear each other with mud. In the same way, the friends also sprinkle them (with water etc.) and the two also sprinkle them.

53-59a. Then the two, O brāhmaṇa, being tired due to

many pastimes proper for the time in the groves endowed with vernal breezes on all sides, resort, with their attendants, to the root of a tree, and sitting on a divine seat, drink liquor, O best sage. Then the two, intoxicated due to the liquor, with their eyes closed due to sleep, holding each other's hands, being under the influence of Cupid's arrows, and desiring to sport, enter, with their words and mind stumbling on the path. There they sport like a female elephant and (the male elephant,) the lord of the herd. All the friends also, intoxicated by wine, and with their eyes troubled by sleep (i.e. drowsy) sleep all around in the charming bowers. Again and again incited by his beloved, Kṛṣṇa, the lord, would go near all, with a separate body (for each) and simultaneously. Having satisfied all of them as a lord of elephants satisfies the female elephants, he would, along with his beloved and with them, go to the lake to sport.

59b-69. Then the two, with their attendants, sport between themselves by sprinkling water (on each other). They are adorned with garments, garlands, sandal(-pastes), and also with divine ornaments. O sage, I have there, in a chamber full of divine gems, on the bank of the lake, already arranged fruits and roots. Hari, having eaten first, and being clasped by his beloved, and being served by two or three (maids) would go to a bed made of flowers. There, being served (by them) with tāmbūlas, fans and shampooing of his feet, he laughing with them, and remembering his beloved rejoices. Rādhikā too, when Hari is asleep, extremely delighted along with her attendants, having put her heart into him, eats what is left over (by him). Having but eaten a little there, she would go to the bed-chamber to see her lover's face as the female cakora bird sees the moon. The maids there have told (her) about his having chewed the tāmbūla. She also chews tāmbūlas and distributes them among her dear friends. Kṛṣṇa too, desiring to hear their free mutual talk, though sleepless, covers himself with a piece of cloth, appearing as if he is asleep. Those too, looking at one another in jest, and getting the hint from somewhere, biting their tongues with their teeth, look at one another's face. Merged as it were into the ocean of bashfulness, they do not say anything for a moment. Just after a moment, having removed the piece of

cloth from his body, and saying 'You were really asleep' they laugh and make him laugh.

70-75. Thus sporting with the attendants by means (of jokes etc. causing) laughter, and having, for a moment, experienced the pleasure of sleep, he sits upon the seat gladly spread by his attendants, and the two having mutually staked necklaces, kisses, embraces and garments, play with dice preceded by jocular talk. Though defeated by his beloved he, saying, 'I have won', proceeds to seize her necklace etc. and is beaten by her. Thus beaten by her on his lotus-like face with her hand Kṛṣṇa, being dejected in his mind, thinks of going. "If, O honourable lady, I am defeated, then accept what is staked (viz.) kisses etc. offered by me." On his saying so she would act like that to see the crookedness of his eyebrows and to hear his words of reproach.

76-80. Then having heard the mutual wordy fight among the sārikās and the parrots, they two, desiring to go home, move out from that place. Having allowed his beloved (to go), Kṛṣṇa would go to the cows. She, accompanied by the circle of her world goes to the Sun's abode (temple). Having gone a little away from there, Hari, again, returning, after having put on the dress of a brāhmaṇa, goes to the Sun's abode. Requested by her friends, he would worship the Sun there, with Vedas (hymns), containing jokes and composed then only. Then the clever ones, having recognised their lover who makes himself known, merge in the ocean of joy, and do not know themselves or other (persons).

81-91a. Having thus passed two watches and a half in various sports, they would go home, and Kṛṣṇa would go (to the place) of the cows. O sage, Kṛṣṇa, joining his friends, and taking the cows from all sides, comes playing upon the flute joyfully to Vraja. Then, all like Nanda and others, so also women and children, hearing the sound of Hari's flute, and also seeing the sky full of dust (raised) by the cows, give up all their jobs, and being eager to see Kṛṣṇa go towards him. Kṛṣṇa also, joining all the residents of Vraja, on the royal path, at Vraja-gate—wherever they are—(honours all) as before in due order—by means of seeing them, touching them, speaking to them, looking them with a smile, saluting with words and physically the old cowherds, and saluting his parents and Rohiṇī also (in such a way that) the eight parts (of the body touch the ground),

O Nārada, so also his beloved with a modest side glance. Thus very much and properly respected by the residents of Vraja, having sent the cows to the cowstall, he goes, after being requested by his parents to his abode with his brother. Having bathed there, having drunk (milk), having eaten a little, and being allowed by his mother, he, with a desire to milk the cows, again goes to the cowstall. Having milked them, and got them milked, having made some of them drink (water), he, being followed by hundreds of venerable men goes home with his father.

91b-101a. There with his father, paternal uncles, their sons, and Baladeva, he eats various kinds of foods like those that are chewed, those that are sucked etc. Even before he entertains a desire, Rādhikā, through her friends, would send dressed foods to his house. Hari, praising them, and eating them with his father etc. would, with the bards, go to the assembly hall. The friends (of Rādhā), that had come there having brought with them many foods, take (from his house) many kinds (of food) given by Yaśodā there and also whatever is left over by Kṛṣṇa. Having brought all that, they inform Rādhikā of it. She too, along with her group of friends, having eaten it in order and being decorated by her friends, would be (ready) to meet by appointment (her lover i.e. Kṛṣṇa). 'From here or there some friend is sent away by me'. Met by her, she, surrounded by her friends, and having put on a dress proper for white (i.e. bright) or black (i.e. dark) night goes to the chamber having divine jewels, near Yamunā. Kṛṣṇa also, seeing their curious things, then having heard delightful music from Kātyāyanī, and having properly pleased them with (gifts of) wealth and grains, and propitiated by people, goes with his mother to the house of his friend.

101b-106a. When his mother departs, he, having eaten, comes here—to the rendezvous—unnoticed and with his beloved. Both of them meet here and play in the groves of trees, with many sports, with Kṛṣṇa's dance with the cowherdess, accompanied with singing and instrumental music and laughter. Thus having spent two watches and a half of the night in sporting, the two desiring to sleep, enter, unnoticed by female birds, the bower. There, in the solitary place, the two sleep on a charming bed made of flowers and for sport, and are served by their

female friends. Thus I have told you the full daily life of Hari. O Nārada, even sinners are freed on hearing it.

Nārada said:

106b-107a. O goddess, I am blessed; I am favoured by you. There is no doubt about it, since today you have disclosed to me the delightful sport of Hari.

Sūta said:

107b-111a. Saying so, going round her, and honoured by her also, Nārada, the best sage, vanished, O brāhmaṇa. I too have told you all (the account) in due order. One should daily carefully mutter this couple of prayers. Formerly Rudra obtained it with effort from Kṛṣṇa's mouth. He told it to Nārada; and Nārada told it to me. Prescribing the sacred rites like this, I have told it to you. You too have to guard this very wonderful secret.

Śaunaka said:

111b-112a. O great one, I have been actually contented by your favour, since you disclosed to me the secret of secrets (i.e. the greatest secret).

Sūta said:

112b-117. Practising these modes, and muttering the hymn day and night, you will soon obtain the position of his attendant. There is no doubt about it. O brāhmaṇa, I too have to go to the eternal abode of the supreme lord of lords on the bank of Yamunā. Those men who, full of devotion, listen to this glorious and very pure account narrated by Maheśa, go to the eternal place of Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). It is excellent, it gives glory, promotes (long) life, health and gives desired success. It is the cause of the wealth in the form of heaven and salvation, and destroys sins. Those men, devoted to Viṣṇu, who everyday devoutly recite it, never come back from the heaven of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFOUR

Meditation of the Lord

The sages said:

1-5. O Sūta, O Sūta, O glorious, pleasing Romaharṣaṇa, you have told (us) a story giving delight to the world. O highly virtuous one, we have heard the entire, very wonderful life of Śrīkṛṣṇa, as you narrated it. We are pleased with it. Oh, since (the recital of) the glory of Śrikṛṣṇa gives (the highest) position (i.e. salvation) to the devotees, who would not then obtain joy by (listening to) it? Therefore, we again desire to hear the great account of Śrīkṛṣṇa, so also other vows, presents, worship or bath which were formerly done by whom and how. Tell all that in detail so that we would be satisfied.

Sūta said:

6-10a. O best brāhmaṇas, you have asked well about the great liberating (account). You whose minds are full of devotion to Kṛṣṇa are blessed. O best brāhmaṇas, I shall tell (you) the life of Kṛṣṇa, a great, excellent and auspicious tale which gives great delight to the good. Once the best sage Nārada, dear to the lord, while wandering over the worlds, saw in Mathurā the highly virtuous Ambarīṣa intent on a vow and engaged in worshipping Kṛṣṇa. That best sage, seeing the excellent sage having come (to him) welcomed him, and with his mind delighted, asked with faith as you (have done).

Ambarīṣa said:

10b-18. O sage, that which is said to be the highest Brahman by the teachers of the Veda, is that highest god Nārāyaṇa himself, having lotus-like eyes, who (though) unembodied, is the embodied lord, is manifest and unmanifest and is eternal. He is full of all beings; he is inconceivable. Howshould that Hari, in whom the whole world is sewn lengthwise and crosswise, in whom it remains, who is known as the only highest unmanifest one, and as the highest soul, from whom the origin etc. of the world takes place, who, having created Brahmā, gave him the Vedas

abiding in himself, be meditated upon? Please tell us how he who gives all objects of human pursuit, and who is inaccessible even to the meditating sages, is meditated upon. Those who have not propitiated Govinda, do not know the accomplishment of their well-being. He who has not tasted the drink from the lotus-like feet of Govinda does not get an excellent fruit of penance, sacrifice and gifts. He would not know the rich fruit which is beyond desires. O sage, I do not see a greater expiation for beings than the propitiation of Hari, which removes streams of sins, (of Hari) at the dance (i.e. knitting) of whose eyebrows all accomplishments are known to exist.

19-25a. How is that Keśava propitiated who removes affliction? How is that lord Nārāyaṇa waited upon by men? Being pleased, tell all this to me for the good of the world. By which devotion is this lord, to whom devotion is dear, pleased? How would devotion to him take place? How is he propitiated by all? You are a devotee of Viṣṇu; you are dear to him; you know the highest truth. Therefore, I ask you, O excellent brāhmaṇa knowing the Veda. A question about Kṛṣṇa purifies the listener, the speaker and the questioner, as the water from his feet does. For human beings, human body which is perishable, is difficult to obtain. There also, I think, the dear sight of Viṣṇu is difficult to have. In this worldly existence, company of the good even for half a moment is a treasure of men, from which all the four goals of human life can be secured.

25b-29a. O revered one, your journey is (meant for) the good of all human beings, as that of the parents is for (the good of) children (going) along the excellent path of fame. The life of gods leads to the happiness or unhappiness of living beings. But that of good men like you, who are not fallen, leads to happiness only. Gods honour them in the same way, as (men) honour them. The good men, loving the distressed, are the companions of the acts (of human beings) like their shadow(s). Therefore, O venerable one, teach (us) the way of life of a great devotee of Viṣṇu, by giving which instruction one gets the fruit due to the (study of the) Vedas.

Nārada said:

29b-48a. O king, you, having devotion for Viṣṇu, have ask-

ed well. You know that the highest duty is the one of serving Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu); that when Viṣṇu is propitiated everything is propitiated; that when that Hari full of (i.e. containing) all gods is pleased, the mobile and the immobile (world) is pleased; that by merely remembering Hari the heap of major sins perishes that moment only. Hari alone should be served. O king, who having senses and facing death on all sides, does not worship Mukunda's lotus-like feet which are the object of worship of the sages and deities? The powerful way of life of the good, when heard, studied, reflected upon, honoured and approved of, instantly purifies even those who seek to harm all. That Hari who is the cause even of the cause of the cause, effect etc., who is the unique cause, who is a meditating saint, who is the soul of the world, who is full of the world, who is subtle and gross, who is lean and strong, who is qualityless and has qualities, who is great, who is unborn, who is beyond birth and death, should always be reflected upon. O best among men, you have done this properly, since you are asking (me) about the practices of the followers of Viṣṇu, which promote the welfare of the universe. The spotless stories of Kṛṣṇa who deserves to be glorified, are due to their devotion, the elixir to the soul, mind and ears of the good. This god is to be obtained through devotion. You yourself know it. Yet I tell (about him) for the good of the world and through regard for you. He is Acyuta, whom they describe to be the highest Brahman, and beyond Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti) and Puruṣa, and who controls everything spread through (his) Māyā. The unconquered one, propitiated with devotion, would give everything desired like sons, wife, long life, kingdom and heaven or salvation. O best king, due to love for you, I shall tell you (about) the vows of those men who, through their deeds, mentally and through their speech are devoted to him. Harmlessness, truthfulness, non-stealing, celibacy, freedom from impurity—these are said to be mental vows in order to please Hari. O lord of men, eating once, eating at night (only), fasting, (eating what is had) without begging—this is said to be the bodily vow of men. Study of the Vedas, glorifying Viṣṇu, speaking the truth, absence of slandering—this, O king, is said to be the best vow of speech. A man should always and everywhere recite the names of (Viṣṇu), having the disc as his weapon. In

his glorification there should be no impurity, since he brings about purity. The highest man (Puruṣa), viz. Viṣṇu is propitiated by a man who follows the practices of castes and the (four) stages of human life. There is no other path causing delight. Vāsudeva, the treasure of compassion, is propitiated by means of vows and restraints of mind, speech and body by women to whom the good of their husbands is dear.

48b-52. Even women and śūdras should worship the moon-like Kṛṣṇa, having the excellent form of a brāhmaṇa, according to the manner laid down in sacred texts. The (first) three castes are engaged in worship according to the manner laid down in Vedas; women and śūdras etc. are intent on propitiating (Viṣṇu) by (uttering) his name. Mādhava is not pleased with worships, sacrifices, and even vows. He is said to be merely loving devotion. To women who are loyal wives, their husbands are their deities. The husband should be honoured with Viṣṇu's devotion (i.e. as much devotion as is shown towards Viṣṇu) by means of mental and physical acts and acts of speech. Acts pertaining to Viṣṇu should be performed by thinking (i.e. keeping) in mind the husband.

53-55. The worship of a deity by śūdras also is (done) by (uttering the deity's) name. All should do (the worship) according to the mode laid down in the sacred texts following the Veda. Even women engaged in doing what is dear to their husbands are entitled to the worship etc. of Viṣṇu. This is (what is laid down in) the ancient sacred texts. A man should practise the ritual laid down according to the mode proper for his family. By that Keśava is pleased.

56-60a. The wise worship Hari everyday in the fire with oblations, in water with flowers and in the heart with meditation, and in the Sun's orb with the muttering (of a prayer). Harmlessness is the first flower. Control of senses is the second flower. Compassion to beings is the third (flower); and forgiveness is the fourth (flower). Tranquillity is the fifth flower; restraint is the sixth (flower). Meditation is the seventh (flower). Truth is the eighth flower. Keśava is pleased with these. Hari is pleased only when worshipped with these eight flowers. O best of men, there are also other external flowers, using which Viṣṇu, when worshipped, is pleased.

60b-63a. (They are:) Water is a flower of Varuṇa. Ghee, milk and curd are a flower of Soma. Food etc. is a flower of Prajāpati. Incense and lamp are a flower of Agni. Fruits, flowers form the fifth flower and it is called Vānaspatya (i.e. of herbs). Kuśas, roots etc. form the Pārthiva flower (i.e. of the Earth). Fragrant substances and candana form the Vāyavya flower (i.e. of Vāyu). The flower of Viṣṇu is called faith; and a musical instrument is said to be the feet of Viṣṇu. When Viṣṇu is worshipped with these, he is pleased.

63b-69a. The sun, fire, a brāhmaṇa, cows, a devotee of Viṣṇu, the sky, the wind, the water, the earth, the soul—all these are the places of Viṣṇu's worship. A man should worship with a sacrifice, with the muttering of a hymn in the sun, with an oblation in fire, with hospitality towards an excellent brāhmaṇa, and with a mouthful of water etc. in (i.e. towards) a cow, with the good deeds of a brother in (i.e. towards) a devotee of Viṣṇu, with firm meditation in the heart, with the thought that Vāyu is the chief in Vāyu, with substances accompanied by water in water, with main parts of hymns on a bare ground, with enjoyments in the soul; and he should worship the individual supreme soul as being equal (i.e. the same) in all beings. On these subordinate altars his form is endowed with a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus; it has four arms; is calm. Being devout and reflecting upon the form he should worship it. When he is worshipped by brāhmaṇas, he is (properly) worshipped; there is no doubt about it. When, O king, the lord is censured by them he would be censured.

69b-74a. O brāhmaṇas, that form of Viṣṇu, due to whose support the Vedic texts and the code of laws proceed, is regarded as highly purifying. Everything that is auspicious in the world should be obtained through moral merit only. O king, from (the point of view of) the Vedic texts and the code of laws, moral merit alone is the recourse. Even of the two, the brāhmaṇas are the refuge on the earth. The lord of the world would be worshipped here (i.e. in the world) if he is worshipped by them. The lord, the god of gods, is not that pleased with sacrifices, austerities and meditation or worship as he is with the brāhmaṇas being pleased. A brāhmaṇa is well-versed in the Vedas; knows

the Vedas; promotes them. The lord would be pleased through brāhmaṇas, when the deity in the form of a brāhmaṇa is pleased.

74b-80. When a son worships Viṣṇu, his ancestors from both the families (i.e. of his father and his mother), though plunged in hell for a long time, just then go to heaven. What is the use of their life here or their acts like beasts, whose mind is not disposed to Vāsudeva full of the world? I shall tell (about) the meditation of him who is not seen by anyone. O king, listen to (the description of) the final emancipation which is unique and free from impurity. As a lamp in a place sheltered from wind, being free from wind, is steady and, O highly intelligent one, it, while burning, destroys all darkness, in the same way the soul is free from blemishes, is untainted, is devoid of hope, is steady, powerful, has no friend or foe. So also he does not have pain or pleasure, or dejection, or greed or jealousy or delusion. He is free from confused talks and attractions and from pleasure or pain. He is also free from all objects of senses. Then he becomes one who has absolute knowledge and beatitude is produced (in him).

81-87. O king of kings, a lamp, all alone and free from wind, would dry up, with the help of the wick, the oil due to its contact with the act of the flame. O highly intelligent one, later on it ejects soot of the lamp; a black line is seen. Having drawn up the oil it would be pure in lustre. Similarly, the soul remaining inside the body would dry up the oil in the form of (one's) deeds. Making the objects of senses the soot, he would himself illumine. Free from the breezes called wrath, greed etc. and being desireless and steady, he would brighten up his own lustre. Remaining in his own place, he sees the three worlds by means of his own lustre. I have described to you this (soul) that is of the form of absolute knowledge.

88-95. Those great souls, intent upon the knowledge about Brahman and endowed with abstract meditation, who do not see him, the omniscient one, manifesting everything are ignorant. Without hands and feet he moves everywhere; and grasps all the three worlds (with) the immovable and the movable. O king, bereft of nose and mouth he smells and eats. Without ears he hears everything. He, the lord of the world, is a witness to everything. (Though) formless, he is connected with a form; is under

the influence of the group of the five (senses). He who is the life of the entire world, is worshipped by the movable and the immovable. Tongueless, he speaks everything as (laid down) in the Vedas and the sacred texts. Though skinless, he gets the touch of all. He is always joyful; has a judicious eye; has one form; and no prop. He is qualityless; does not have the feeling of mineness; pervades (everything); has qualities; is spotless and sinless. He is not influenced by anyone; everything is under his influence; he gives everything; he is the best among the omniscient; he does not have a mother; the mighty one is full of everything. He who, not having any other thought, meditates thus on him full of everything, goes to the formless highest place resembling nectar.

96-109. I shall tell you another (meditation). O very intelligent one, listen to it. O prince he is called Vāsudeva, since the matchless universe, having an embodied form, having a form and formless and pure is perfumed by his dwelling (in it). He has that lustre which would be the one of a showering cloud. In the right hand of him who resembles the sun in lustre, who has four arms, and who is the lord of gods, shines a conch decorated with gold and jewels. O brave one, in the left hand of that magnanimous one shines the Kaumodakī mace which destroys great demons. In his right hand is a great lotus rich in fragrance. It always shines with a weapon and the beauty of the lotus. His neck is like a conch; he has a round face; his eyes are like lotus-petals; he, Hṛṣīkeśa, is shining with teeth like kunda(-petals). The lower lip of Guḍākeśa resembles a coral. He, having eyes like lotuses, looks charming due to a bright crown. Janārdana shines with large, charming chest, marked with Kaustubha only. He also shines with ear-rings resembling the sun in lustre. Hari always shines with the auspicious mark of Śrīvatsa. The best among the victorious shining with armlets, bracelets, necklaces and pearls (bright) like stars, and with his body, is victorious. That Govinda also shines with a garment resembling gold. He shines with rings on his fingers. Hari, endowed with all, complete and divine weapons and ornaments, mounted upon (Garuḍa) the son of Vinatā, is the creator of the worlds and the lord of the world. A man who, with a concentrated mind, meditates upon him, is freed from all sins and goes to Viṣṇu's heaven.

I have thus completely told you about the meditation of the lord of the world.

CHAPTER EIGHTYFIVE

Greatness of Vaiśākha

Ambarīṣa said:

1-2. Well (done), well (done), O greatest sage who favour the world, since you told (me about) the meditation of Viṣṇu, with and without qualities. O you who favour the good, now explain (to me) devotion—of what kinds (it is), by whom (it is done), how (it is done), where (it is done), and when (it is done).

Sūta said:

3-4a. Hearing these words uttered by the best king, the delighted sage again spoke to the king: "O king, listen; I shall (now) properly tell you (about) devotion to Hari, which removes all sins. (Now) I shall tell you (about) devotion of various kinds, which destroys sins.

4b-13a. Devotion is said to be of various kinds: mental, of speech and of body. It may also be (divided as) secular, Vedic and spiritual. Mental devotion is said to be the one in which recollection of the Vedas is done with the idea of having meditation and concentration which brings about devotion to Viṣṇu. That which is done through utterances of prayers and (hymns of) the Vedas, through untired reflections, and mutterings in the forest, is called verbal (devotion). That which accomplishes all objects and is done through vows, fasts, restraints and curbing of the five senses, is said to be physical (devotion). That devotion which is the worship done by men through (offerings made) with ornaments, marked (i.e. decked) with gold and jewels, so also with beautiful words, with ribbons of garments put round the waist, with large purifying fans, with dancing, musical instruments, songs, with all offerings and presents, with eatables, food and drinks, and which is intended

for Nārāyaṇa is said to be secular. The same, accomplishing all objects is said to be physical. That devotion in which mutterings of hymns from the Ṛgveda, Yajurveda and Sāmaveda are done, and studies of the hymnical texts of the Vedas are done with reference to Viṣṇu is said to be Vedic. (So also) the act (of devotion) done through the Vedic hymns, and sacrifices where offerings are made (into fire) is looked upon as Vedic (derived from the Vedas).

13b-18. Offering into fire should be done on the new-moon day and the full-moon day. (Offering) food, giving gifts, a sacrificial oblation made of ground rice and offered in a vessel, an oblation of rice, barley and pulse boiled (and presented to) gods and manes, sacrifices, drinking Soma—are all sacrificial acts. All rites performed in honour of Fire, Earth, Wind, Sky, Light, Śaṅkara and the Sun, (reach) the deity Viṣṇu. O king, spiritual devotion is of various kinds: One is called Sāṁkhya; (another) has come up from Yoga. O king, listen as it is described. The principles like Pradhāna (i.e. Prakṛti), twentyfour in number, are insentient and are objects of enjoyment. The Puruṣa is the twentyfifth (principle) described to be sentient, and is the agent of acts and the enjoyer (of their fruits). The soul is eternal, immutable, controller, and employer. Puruṣa is unmanifest and eternal and Maheśvara would be the cause.

19-25. Really (there are three creations): Creation of principles, psychic creation and physical creation. The Pradhāna of the Sāṁkhya is of the nature of guṇas (constituents). The similarity and difference and that the Pradhāna is of a different nature should be known; so also the cause of Brahman is said to be desire. The being directed of the Pradhāna is said to be the difference. Brahman is all action; Puruṣa also has absence of action. This is said to be the similarity with the insentient Pradhāna. There is a difference among the principles, and they are related to one another as cause and effect. The wise who ponder over all true principles call it Sāṁkhya, knowing through the number of the principles, the employment and the state of being employed (of the principles). Knowing in this way its existence, and the number of principles correctly, the wise know that the physical principle is in addition to the principle of Brahman. This devotion formulated by the Sāṁkh-

yas is known as spiritual devotion. O king, I shall also tell you (about) the devotion, due to (i.e. in accordance with) the Yoga (school).

26-30. A man always given to controlling his breath, (always) reflecting and controlling his senses, eating what is obtained by begging, having controlled all senses, having reflected upon the mental representation (of Viṣṇu) in his heart, reflects upon the great god seated in the pericarp of the lotus of heart, wearing a yellow garment, and having charming eyes, and seeing (the lord) with a bright face, and having the sacred thread round his waist, of a white complexion, having four arms, and having the hand giving boons and fearlessness. This mental accomplishment due to Yoga is said to be great devotion to Viṣṇu. He who is thus devoted to the lord, is called Viṣṇu's devotee. O prince, I have thus explained various kinds of devotion, according to these divisions, viz. Sāttvikī (endowed with the quality of sattva or goodness), Rājasī (endowed with the quality of rajas or passion) and Tāmasī (endowed with the quality of tamas or darkness).

31-35. Many kinds should be known (of devotion) to Viṣṇu of unlimited lustre. As fire with highly blazing flames reduces fuel to ashes, in the same way devotion to the lord burns sins at that moment only. Till a man does not, on the earth, hear about devotion to Viṣṇu which is actually nectar, the essence of all other liquids, he obtains hundreds of striking afflictions (in the form) of old age, death, birth, due to many bodies (i.e. many existences). The endless lord, when described, when his fame is thought about, when his majestic lustre is heard (i.e. known) internally, destroys all sins, as wind does the clouds, or the sun does the darkness. The heart does not obtain that purity by means of gifts, worship, sacrifice, bath at a sacred place, behaving as laid down in sacred texts, and austerities, which it has when the eternal lord is in the heart. O lord of men, the stories are pure; they are true; these true stories about Hari are alone wholesome.

36-41. (As) these stories of him of a pure form are heard here by you whose good fame is heard, you are blessed. O brave king, you are the leader of the right path. Your heart is concentrated on Puruṣottama, since your firm heart, your good

luck, have become prone to listening to the good deed of lord Śrīkṛṣṇa. O king, how can a self-respecting man have religious merit without propitiating with devotion Viṣṇu who grants boons and who is immutable? He, the guileless one, is born of illusion, and is won over through sincere devotion. You being a good man, know it yourself. O king, the truth about the way of life is not unknown to you. Yet you are asking me about the pure sacred place on this occasion. There is no greater sweetness than this, viz. the glorification of Viṣṇu's devotee. I do not see greater nourishment of delight and proper religious merit mutually (i.e. enhancing each other). The good having greater devotion very much enjoy his unlimited qualities, having unending religious merit.

42-47. Brāhmaṇas, a cow, truth faith, sacrifice, austerities, sacred texts, Smṛti-texts, compassion, initiation and tranquillity are the bodies of Hari. The lord (occupies) the sun, the moon, wind, earth, water, the sky, quarters, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra—is full of all beings. He, of the form of the universe, himself created this mobile and immobile world. Having entered (the body of) a brāhmaṇa, he himself always eats food. Therefore, worship the brāhmaṇas, the dust of whose feet is a sacred place, who are gods on the earth, the abode of the mountains, who are high-souled, who are all-in-all of the auspicious Lakṣmī, and the souls of all. He who properly looks upon a learned brāhmaṇa as Viṣṇu, and who is attached to his own duties, is alone the devotee of Viṣṇu. I have told a secret (to you). It is time for me to go and bathe in Gaṅgā. There is (now) no more time for the story (to be continued).

48-51. The auspicious month of Vaiśākha, dear to Mādhava, has come. In it also the seventh day (for bathing) in Gaṅgā is extremely difficult to get. Formerly on the seventh day of the bright half of Vaiśākha, Jāhnavī (i.e. Gaṅgā) was drunk through anger by Jahnu, and let out from the cavity of his right ear. A man should, after having bathed in her (water), propitiate Gaṅgā, the girdle of the sky, according to proper rites. Such a man is blessed and fortunate. A mortal (i.e. a man) who would, according to the proper rites, gratify deities and manes in her (water), would see (himself as) the one who has had ablution there, and whose sins have gone away.

52-59. There is no month like Vaiśākha; there is no river like Gaṅgā. Such a difficult combination is secured only through devotion to Hari. She (i.e. Gaṅgā) has sprung up from the water (flowing) from the feet of Viṣṇu; she came (down) from Brahmā's heaven. She is not tired (though flowing) in three streams, and she purifies the three worlds. She is a ladder for climbing to the heaven; she always gives joy; she removes the streams of many sins; she helps to surmount a difficulty. She remains in the twisted hair of Śiva. She removes grief. She destroys the lover's sport (i.e. lust) in the heart of the man who worships her. She is the cause of the emancipation of Sagara's family. She sustains Dharma (righteousness). The goddess moves along three paths; she adorns the worlds. By means of her sight, touch, bath (in her water), recital (of her virtues), reflection (on her) and resorting to her, she purifies, in thousands, virtuous and non-virtuous men. Even when those away from her say 'Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā, Gaṅgā' at dawn, noon and sunset, she destroys their sins earned (i.e. committed) during three existences. If a man at (a distance of) thousands of yojanas remembers Gaṅgā, he, even though a sinner, obtains the highest position (i.e. salvation).

60-67. Especially on the seventh day of the bright half of Vaiśākha, she is difficult to reach; (but) is obtained through the favour of the brāhmaṇa in the form of Hari, the protector of the world. There is no month like Vaiśākha; there is none so supreme as Mādhava (Viṣṇu or Vaiśākha). The stream of the water of the sins of him who dips (in Gaṅgā in Vaiśākha) is gone. O king, that which is given, uttered, offered, or the bath taken devoutly (in Gaṅgā) in the month of Vaiśākha, would become inexhaustible religious merit hundreds of crores of times more (that what is given etc.). As among gods is the soul of the universe, viz. god Nārāyaṇa Hari, (or) as Gāyatrī is among the muttered hymns, so is Jāhnavī among rivers. As Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) is (best) among all females, or as the sun is (best) among those that shine, as the gain of health is among gains, as Brāhmaṇa is among bipeds, as obliging others is among the acts of religious merit, as the Vedas are among lores, as Om is among the prayers, as self-reflection is among reflections, as truth and abiding by the rules of one's own class are superior to austeri-

ties, as purity about wealth is among purities, as grant of fearlessness is among gifts, as the end of greed is said to be the chief among virtues, in the same way the month of Vaiśākha is said to be the best among months.

68-77. The śrāddha (offered in it), (or) the sacrifice (performed in it), (or) the gift (given in it), (or) a fast (observed in it), so also austerities (practised) in it, or study or worship etc. done in it—all this is said to have inexhaustible fruit. Sins end in Vaiśākha; darkness ends with (the rise of) the Sun; harm done to others and wickedness end with good deeds. O king, all that bath, gifts etc. (done or given) in the month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra, would be a parārdha-fold more (meritorious). Thousand times more (is the religious merit) when (bath etc. is had) in the month of Māgha when the Sun is in Aquarius. It is hundred times more when, in Vaiśākha, the Sun is in Aries. Those men who having bathed in the morning worship (Viṣṇu), the enemy of (the demon) Madhu, in the month of Vaiśākha, according to the proper rites, are fortunate and blessed. Taking morning bath in Vaiśākha, (offering) sacrifices, (giving) gifts, (observing) fasts, (offering) oblations, and practising celibacy (in Vaiśākha) destroy great sins. Again, O king, in Kaliyuga the greatness of Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) is to be kept secret (like) Aśvamedha etc. The meritorious Aśvamedha (i.e. the horse-sacrifice) does not take place in Kali (age). This rite of Vaiśākha is similar to that of Aśvamedha. The sinners of wicked minds do not realise in Kali (age) the religious merit of the horse-sacrifice, viz. attaining heaven and salvation. Men born in it being sinners, must go into the ocean of hell. Therefore its spread is made rare by him."

CHAPTER EIGHTYSIX

Acts to be Performed in Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words of the high-souled Nārada, the royal sage Ambarīṣa who was amazed, said (these) words:

Ambarīṣa said:

2-11. O great sage, leaving auspicious months like Mārga-śīrṣa etc. why do you praise Vaiśākha as the month superior to all (other) months? Why is Vaiśākha most dear to Viṣṇu? What are the rites (to be done) in it? What are the gifts (to be given)? What is the penance (to be practised) and the deities (to be invoked in it)? O sage, please be graceful by favour of your advice, to me who am purified by the dust of your lotus-like feet. O great sage, you alone know the way of life; you emancipate (men) on the ways of religious life. You know the entire truth, you teach the way of life. You are an author, you are an instructor; you are a thinker; you respect (others); you are an employer. O best sage, those who distribute equally, are remembered by those who know sacred texts. All that fruit which is obtained by vows, sacrificial sessions, penance, gifts, is obtained by (giving) instruction in the way of life. O sage, he who prompts another, is also the sharer of the fruit of a bath at a sacred place, penance, and sacrifices which he (who is prompted) gets. Other people do what the pre-eminent people do. The people follow the authority accepted by them. Therefore, you deserve to teach (i.e. please teach) me that wonderful way of life. The advice of a teacher proper for the place and occasion is difficult to get. There are no other objects such as gaining a kingdom, which cool us (i.e. me) down as a meeting with you.

Sūta said:

12. Then the best sage Nārada, with his teeth shining due to a gentle, soft smile said to Ambarīṣa.

Nārada said:

13-19. O king, listen. I shall narrate, for the good of the world and of you, the rites (performed) in the month of Vaiśākha, which I formerly heard from Brahmā. It is difficult to get birth in Bhārata. (More difficult) than that is to be (born as) a human being. Proceeding according to one's own way of life is (more difficult) than being born as a human being. O king, more difficult than that is devotion to Vāsudeva. There also, the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, is difficult. Those

men, who, having come across that month, perform (acts like) bathing, (giving) gifts and muttering prayers according to rules, are blessed and fortunate. Merely by seeing them, sinners, desiring religious merit and purified by devotion to the lord, become free from sins. Those who, with voluntary religious observances, have bathed (according to rules) in the month of Māgha, sport for a crore of years in the Nandana grove. As in the world there is no lake like the ocean, in the same way there is no other month like Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu.

20-29. Sins remain in the bodies of men till the Vaiśākha month, destroying impurity, does not come. The remaining five days of that month, beginning with the eleventh day are equal to the entire month. Those who have, with various articles, worshipped god Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, have obtained the fruit of their existence. What more and more difficult (gain) is not obtained by means of bathing and properly worshipping the highest lord in the month of Vaiśākha? O king, the existence of those who have not given (gifts), who have not offered oblations into fire, who have not muttered prayers, who have not met with death at a sacred place, who have not at all reflected upon Nārāyaṇa, the destroyer of all sins, is fruitless. The wealth of that man who is a miser, when there is wealth with him and he dies without giving (gifts), is useless. Birth in a good family is obtained by bathing at a holy place etc. and penance. (But) O king, nothing (of these) serves (a man) without (i.e. unless he gives) gifts. Due to the importance of a (regular) bath during the five days in the month of Vaiśākha birth in a good family is obtained, so also wealth of various kinds (is obtained). So also, O king, a good son, a good family, wealth, grains, excellent women, good birth, (painless) death, nice enjoyments and pleasures (are secured).

30-34. O king, by the grace of that god—the high-souled Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, greater love for giving gifts, generosity, excellent courage, and desired accomplishments take place. A man having bathed in the month of Kārtika or Māgha or Vaiśākha and having especially devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, the killer of (the demon) Madhu, and having given gifts according to his capacity, and having had pleasures of this world, would reach the place of Viṣṇu. As darkness disappears at sunrise,

similarly the series of sins earned (i.e. committed) during many existences would disappear by bathing in the month of Vaiśākha. The self-born one (i.e. Brahmā) himself told me these words. Viṣṇu gave a great currency to the month named Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) and considering secretly Yama's words, made it go to the human world.

35-40. Therefore, O great king, when this month of Vaiśākha has arrived, the devotees of Viṣṇu should bathe in the holy water, purifying men, of Gaṅgā, or of Revā, or Yamunā or Sāradā. O best king, having got up before sunrise, and having worshipped, according to sacred injunction, Mukunda or Madhusūdana, the lord of gods, and having enjoyed all desired superior pleasures along with sons, grandsons and wealth, and having practised penance, one would obtain heaven which is inexhaustible. O glorious one, having known like this, having bathed, worship according to proper rites Madhusūdana, especially in Vaiśākha. Having worshipped Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, you will obtain happiness, a son, wealth and Viṣṇu's position. O king, having saluted the god of gods, Viṣṇu, destroyer of sins, a man should begin this vow of the full-moon day of Caitra.

41-47. Endowed with curbs and restraints, and having given something according to his capacity, eating food fit to be eaten during these days, sleeping on the (bare) ground, remaining in the vow of celibacy, emaciated due to austerities like bodily mortification, meditating on Nārāyaṇa in his heart, he should, when the full-moon day of Vaiśākha has arrived, offer honey, sesamum seeds etc. He (should also give) food to the chief brāhmaṇas devoutly and a cow along with presents. He should also request the brāhmaṇas for the absence of a defect in the (effect of) the bath. O king, as Lakṣmī is dear to Viṣṇu, the lord of the world, so is the month of Vaiśākha dear to Madhusūdana. A man, having thus bathed (in every Vaiśākha) according to the rites for twelve years, should, according to his capacity, bring it to conclusion to please Madhusūdana. O king, I have told you this importance of the month of Vaiśākha, which I had formerly heard from the mouth of Brahmā.

CHAPTER EIGHTYSEVEN

Subtle Are the Ways of Dharma

Sūta said:

1. Having heard these words of Nārada the king who was amazed, saluted him, and thinking of Viṣṇu said (to him):

Ambarīṣa said:

2. O sage, we are confused. How can a very difficult fruit be obtained by a little exertion—merely by means of a bath?

Nārada said:

3-5a. O king, you have spoken the truth that with little exertion great fruit is obtained. Have faith in it. It is the statement of the Creator. The ways of religious merit are subtle; for they are difficult to understand even for the masters. (Even) the learned are bewildered about the act of Viṣṇu whose power is inconceivable. O king, kṣatriyas like Viśvāmitra attained brāhmaṇahood due to the excellence of religious merit.

5b-15a. Therefore, the ways of religious merit are subtle. O king, even Ajāmila who was known as a female slave's husband, had abandoned his religiously wedded wife and always remained on the path of sin. When he died, he, through affection for his son, called, 'Nārāyaṇa'. Due to that thought and utterane of the name (Nārāyaṇa) he obtained a position very difficult to be had. As fire, though touched unwillingly (i.e. unknowingly) burns (one's limb etc.), in the same way, the name of Govinda, though uttered under a pretext (i.e. non-seriously or casually), burns (the sins). The grandsons of sage Vyāsa cohabited with their brothers' wives. Similarly the sons of Pāṇḍu were themselves sons born of their mothers (Kuntī and Mādrī) by those (deities) other than Pāṇḍu. O king, all the five Pāṇḍavas enjoyed Draupadī. And (still) their fame is auspicious. Therefore, the course of religious merit is subtle. Strange are the deeds (of human beings); strange are the ideas of beings. Strange are the beings; strange are the potencies of acts. Perhaps a good deed which remained hidden, grows with some auspicious act, O king; and in a certain existence it gives a great fruit. Religious merit is subtle, and cannot

be guaged in any manner. O king, no positive evidence for the fruit of this (auspicious deed) is heard (i.e. available). A certain auspicious deed, covered by other sins, comes from somewhere and gives its fruit somewhere.

15b-23. There is no destruction of a good or bad deed in this world. Yet due to many auspicious deeds a terrible sin goes (away). O king, with regard to the statement which you made, that due to great exertion great religious merit is (had), listen from me about the cause thereof. If little or much exertion depends upon smallness or greatness (of an activity), then the cultivators etc. would always be men of great religious merit. The utterance of a hymn is a great exertion for a lion. The five products of a cow would not have been (mentioned) as constituents of a vow. Thus the greatness or smallness of an act that ought to be done would follow from another vow of (i.e. like) entering water or fire. There is no such rule that this is a small or this is a great (exertion). O king, the fruit alone which is mentioned in the sacred texts, would be great. As a small (thing) is destroyed by a great one, in the same way a great (thing) is destroyed by a small one. A heap of grass (i.e hay) is burnt even by a small spark of fire. A thousand formidable sins connected with killing, crores of violations (of the modesty) of the teacher's wife, sins like theft, committed by devotees of Kṛṣṇa through ignorance, come to an end.

24-31. (Even) a small good act, done by Viṣṇu's good and wise devotee, would obtain an inexhaustible fruit, O hero. No doubt should be entertained in this (matter). A man having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, would obtain whatever is desired by him. By means of devotion to Viṣṇu, children, wealth, gems, a wife, a mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven, salvation are not away (from the devotee). Thus, there is no doubt that even by means of (an act done according to) rite told in sacred texts, there would be the destruction of a great sin, and the nourishment (i.e. enhancement) of good deeds. The fruit would increase, O king, due to the excellence of devotion and deeds. Even by means of the various (fruits), the course of religious merit should be understood to be subtle. This month of Vaiśākha is dear to the great-souled Viṣṇu. Even if one is observed (i.e. even if bath etc. is done in only

one Vaiśākha) by people, it gives the entire desired (object). O king, this is my view that a man who is given to bathing (right) from his birth with the holy water of Gaṅgā at the proper time and place, who is void of devotion and yet is a giver, does not become pure. Creatures live at holy places on Gaṅgā etc. and flocks of birds always live in temple(s). (Though) they observe fasts, they, being bereft of devotion, meet with death, and do not get the (highest) position (i.e. salvation).

32-38. We are not able to describe the religious merit of him who devoutly keeping Viṣṇu in his heart, who intent on bathing and thus being pure, worships Viṣṇu in Vaiśākha. He, defective in devotion, having entered fire at the time of his death, after the fire which is sprinkled with ghee and oil, whose flames are turning round, is enkindled, does not go to heaven, nor does he obtain any other (good) fruit. Therefore, O king, have faith in the fruit of (i.e. given by) Mādhava. Even a small auspicious act destroys (the fruit of) hundreds of impious acts. As due to the fear of Viṣṇu's name the hosts of all sins perish, and O king, as they perish by bathing in the morning at a holy place when the Sun is in Aries, similarly they certainly perish by taking a bath at dawn (every day) in Vaiśākha, as serpents perish by the lustre of Garuḍa. He, O king, who bathes in Gaṅgā or Narmadā when the Sun is in Aries, and devoutly recites the hymn removing sins, once, twice or thrice, at dawn, noon and evening, goes, being free from sins, to the highest place (i.e. salvation).

39-40. O Ambarīṣa, for getting great religious merit, take care to observe the rule of taking bath in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha. What is said to be obtained by those living in the city of Ānarta for crores of years, is obtained by a single morning bath in the month of Vaiśākha.

41-48. O king, listen to an old account in this regard, viz. the conversation with his wife of the brāhmaṇa Devaśarman. On the bank of Revā, in the very auspicious holy place Amarakaṇṭaka was born the best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman as the son of Kauśika. He was sonless, had no wealth, and was having (i.e. suffering from) many afflictions. He was always troubled by the great grief of poverty. Day and night he would think about a means of (getting) a son and wealth also. Once his beloved wife, of a good vow, named Sumanā, saw her husband full of anxiety

and with his face hung down. Seeing her husband at that time she, the glorious one, said: "Your mind is agitated by numberless troubles. You are confused with delusions. O you very intelligent one, give up your anxiety. Tell me your grief, be calm, be happy; for there is no other grief like anxiety that dries up the body. He who would give it up, becomes happy. O lord, O brāhmaṇa, tell me the cause of your anxiety."

Nārada said:

49. Having heard the words of his dear wife, the very intelligent Devaśarman, having the chaste wife as his companion, though afflicted, said (these) words:

Devaśarman said:

50-51. O good one, I shall tell you all about the cause of my worry, which you have thought about; having heard it, listening (to me), understand it accurately. O you of a good vow, I do not know for what sin I am wealthless and sonless. This is the cause of my anxiety.

Sumanā said:

52-66. Listen, I shall speak (that) which (instruction) will remove all doubt, and will contain all wisdom. Contentment alone is the great auspicious cause of happiness etc. Lack of contentment is a great sin. So said lord Hari. This greed is the seed of sin and its root is ignorance. Falsehood is its trunk; and the great trunks are there due to its great expanse. Its leaves are lustful passion and crookedness; it is always blossomed with bad thought. Its fragrance is falsehood, and ignorance is its fruit. Its walls are the heretics and thieves. The cruel, the fraudulent, the sinners are the birds that have resorted to the large branches of the tree of ignorance. Its great fruit is ignorance, and unrighteousness is the juice in the fruit. It is nourished by the water of emotion; and vehement desire loves its nourishment. It has delight in unrighteous acts, and becomes sweet due to being moist. With fruits like that the tree of greed is fructified. A man who lives by resorting to its shadow, every day eats its self-ripe fruits; being well-nourished by the juice of the fruits—unrighte-

ousness—a man would be well-fed; he (then) sets about for a fall. Therefore, O (my) lord, one should not, resorting to anxiety, have greed. One should not worry about wealth, sons and a wife. O dear one, he who is not wise, being deluded, day and night thinks in vain along the path (i.e. in the manner) of fools. 'How shall I get good objects? How shall I get sons?' The deluded one thinks like this day and night. While worrying he would find great pleasure (just) for a moment. Again he becomes conscious, and is troubled by great affliction. O Brāhmaṇa, giving up anxiety and delusion, follow him. O you very intelligent one, in the worldly existence (one) has relation with none else. Friends, relations, sons, father, mother, are related to themselves only. So also is wife and others.

Devaśarman said:

67. O good one, tell me in detail, of what kind is the relation due to which all—wealth, sons etc. and kinsmen—happen (to be related).

Sumanā said:

68-80. O (my) husband, five kinds of sons are born. I shall now tell about (i.e. explain) them. They are: one who snatches away what is deposited with him; the other is the one connected through debt; enemy; suitable; and neutral, O dear one. O lord, I shall narrate their characteristics separately. Sons, friends, dear wife, father, mother, kinsmen are born on the earth being related to themselves (only). He who has been robbed (of his wealth) on the earth by snatching away his deposit, that is the owner of the deposit; he would be born as a virtuous, handsome son in the house of him who had snatched the deposit. There is no doubt about this. He had passed (away) after having given (the son) the affliction of snatching away the deposit. The owner of the deposit was (i.e. would be) a virtuous, handsome son, endowed with all (good) characteristics, of him who had snatched away the deposit. Talking agreeably and sweetly, and being eloquent, he would show great affection. Being (born) as his son of great qualities, he would, O glorious one, give very fearful affliction, which he (i.e. the father in the present existence) had given him, after generating matchless love and after having seized his wealth,

by means of snatching away his deposit. Being short-lived he meets with death. Again and again striking him and giving grief to him, he departs. When he (i.e. the father) says: 'O son, O son', and laments, then he laughs: 'Who is whose son?' 'This wicked one snatched away my deposit; due to the snatching away of (my wealth), and due to great, unbearable grief, my life formerly departed. Then (I shall depart) by giving him grief, and seizing his excellent wealth'.

CHAPTER EIGHTYEIGHT

Sumanā on Kinds of Sons

Sumanā said:

1-11. (Now) I shall describe to you the son connected through debt. Someone having taken debt from someone dies. The giver of wealth (lender) being a son, or a brother, or a father, or a beloved, would, always wicked internally, remain in the form of a friend. He, of a rough figure, would not at all notice virtue(s). He always speaks cruel words to his relatives. He eats sweet (articles of food), and always enjoys pleasures. He is always engaged in gambling, and longs for stealing. He steals money from the house, and, when prevented, gets angry. Every day he abuses his father and mother. He is a thief; he frightens (others); he speaks very harsh words. Thus having seized his wealth, he remains happily. In childhood he takes formidable wealth through the ceremony performed at his birth etc. Again on the occasions of marriage etc. (he takes money) many times and in various ways. In this way the wealth is reduced, and he says this much also: 'All this—the house, the field—is mine. There is no doubt about it.' Every day he torments his father and mother with strong sticks, pestles and by ruthlessly plucking their hair. On the death of his father and mother the very cruel one becomes affectionless and harsh. There is no doubt about

it. He never performs the śrāddha-rites and never gives gifts. O king, dear sons become like this.

12-16a. O best brāhmaṇa, I shall describe to you the inimical son. When childhood has come, he always behaves as a son. He, while sporting, would beat his father and mother. Having beaten them and again and again laughed he goes away. Again he comes there and is always angry with his father and mother, and abuses them every day. Thus, due to wealth he always indulges in inimical acts. Then again having beaten his father and mother, the wicked-souled one just goes away due to the power of the former enmity.

16b-21. Now I shall describe how the proper son would become dear. As soon as he is born, he would do what is agreeable, and by means of sportive beatings (he would do what is agreeable) in his childhood. Then, after he attains youth, he would do what would please his mother and father. Through devotion (to them) he would please them, and by means of affection, words, and conversing with them in a pleasing way, he would gratify both of them. Coming to know of the death of the elders, he weeps through affection (for them). Being extremely afflicted he performs all śrāddha-rites and offers them piṇḍas. He gives them support of life. Being resolute, he, having the three debts, would certainly, through affection, emancipate them. O dear one, since he would be a proper (son), he would give (to him from whom he borrows). There is no doubt about this. O very wise one, he becomes a son in this manner.

22-27a. Now before you I shall describe the neutral son, O dear one. He always behaves in a neutral manner. He does not at all give. He does not receive. He does not get angry, or is not pleased. O best brāhmaṇa, the neutral one does not go away after abandoning (his parents). Servants, beasts, so also horses, elephants, buffaloes—all these are connected (with a man) through debt. One of us, or both of us have not taken anything fraudulently, nor have we made any deposit with anyone in our former existence; I am not pleasing anyone. O dear one, listen for a moment. (Right) from our childhood I have not had enmity with anyone in the former existence; and O best brāhmaṇa, I have not abandoned my husband. Realising this, be calm; give up (this) useless anxiety. O lord, you never snatched (anything)

from anybody; nor have you given (anything) to anyone. How will (then) wealth come to you? Do not be surprised, for whatever is obtained by one who guards (i.e. tries to guard) it, does not remain (with him).

27b-32. Realising thus, be calm; give up (this) useless anxiety. To whom do the sons, dear wife, kinsmen and relatives belong? In this mundane existence nobody belongs to anyone (else). There is no connection (between two persons), O best brāhmaṇa. Men of wicked feelings, deluded by infatuation and illusion (say:) "This is my house; this is my son; this is my wife." O dear one, the bond of the worldly existence appears to be untrue.

CHAPTER EIGHTYNINE

Devaśarman's Life in the Previous Birth

Nārada said:

1-3. Thus addressed (by his wife) the best brāhmaṇa, Devaśarman, again spoke to his wife, having (his) welfare in mind, and talking wisely: "O good one, you have told the truth which destroys (i.e. removes) all doubts, for it has been said that good men, the truly wise ones, desire (the continuity of) their family. O dear one, I am not so much anxious about (getting) wealth as about (having) a son. With whatever means I shall produce (i.e. have) a son."

Sumanā said:

4-11. A man wins the worlds through a son. A son emancipates (his) family. O glorious one, due to a good son, the father and mother survive. O dear one, it is better to have one son (only). What is the use of (having) many worthless sons? One son emancipates the family; the others (i.e. many sons) cause torment. Formerly only I have said that (these) others (simply) enjoy relation. Due to religious merit a good son is

had; due to religious merit (birth in a noble) family is obtained. A good womb (i.e. being conceived by a noble woman) is obtained through religious merit, and a bad death is had as a result of sins. A heap of pleasures (is had due to religious merit), O dear one. I am telling the truth only. A man lives by celibacy, truth, penance, necessary means of living, gifts, restraints, forgiveness, purity, O dear one; so also by harmlessness, might and non-stealing also. By means of these ten constituents he produces Dharma only. By means of these constituents Dharma becomes complete as the foetus (becomes complete) by means of limbs in the womb. A righteous person produces Dharma with three kinds of acts (viz. of body, of mind and of speech). Dharma being pleased with him, gives him meritorious pleasures. The wise one obtains whatever he thinks of.

Devaśarman said:

12-14. O respectable lady, you have told me the entire excellent knowledge called Dharma. O glorious one, O you of a good vow, if you know, tell me how I would obtain a son devoted to Viṣṇu and possessing virtues. O sinless one, you have obtained (i.e. learnt) the whole way of Dharma from your father. O dear one, I know that due to the favour of Cyavana, with whom Viṣṇu was formerly pleased, you are one who expounds the Vedas.

Sumanā said:

15-20. O you who know religious merit, go to Vasiṣṭha. Request that great sage. From him you will obtain the son knowing religious merit, to whom religious merit is dear.

When these words were uttered by her, the best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman (said:) "O auspicious one, I shall follow your advice. There is no doubt about it." Saying so, that best brāhmaṇa Devaśarman went to Vasiṣṭha who knew everything, who was bright, who was the best among those who practised penance, who, the best brāhmaṇa, remained on a seat on the bank of Gaṅgā, who was surrounded by flames of lustre, who was, as it were, another sun, who, the glorious one, was shining, who was the lion among brāhmaṇas and the best brāhmaṇa. He

repeatedly and devoutly saluted, (prostrating himself) like a staff, that sage. That very lustrous son of Brahmā (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) said to the sinless one: "O you very intelligent one, be comfortably seated on the auspicious seat."

Nārada said:

21-23. The best among the meditating saints who was seated, said to (Devaśarman) the treasure of penance: "O dear man, O glorious one, in your house, your wife and servants are well, so also everything is well with fires, with which sacred rites are performed. You are healthy in all limbs; and you always practise righteous things." Saying so, the very wise (Vasiṣṭha) again said to the brāhmaṇa: "O best brāhmaṇa, what cherished desire of yours (should) I fulfil?"

Nārada said:

24-28. Having spoken these good words to the brāhmaṇa, he ceased speaking. Then that glorious brāhmaṇa said to Vasiṣṭha, the best among sages, the magnanimous one, and the best among those who practised penance: "O revered best brāhmaṇa, (please) listen to my words; you may interrupt (me). Due to which condition (I am suffering from) poverty? How (is it that I am) not having the happiness of (having) a son? O dear one, this is my doubt. Tell me due to which sin (I am poor and sonless). Perplexed by great delusion I was advised by my dear wife, O brāhmaṇa. O dear one, sent by her, I have come to you. Tell me all that which will remove all doubt. (Please) be my emancipator from the bondage of the worldly existence."

Vasiṣṭha said:

29-30. For a man there are five kinds of connections: Sons, friends, so also a brother and other kinsmen and relatives. These respective ones have been already explained to you by Sumanā. O best brāhmaṇa, those (sons) that are related (to the father) through debt, are bad sons.

31-36a. I shall explain to you the auspicious characteristic(s) of a son. He is attached to religious merit; his mind is always

engaged in the practice of truth: he is pure; he is endowed with knowledge; he practised penance; he is the best among the eloquent; he is well-adorned with all rites; he is intent upon Vedic studies; he well knows all sacred texts; he honours gods and brāhmaṇas; he performs all (kinds of) sacrifices; he is a giver and a donor; is sweet-speaking; he is always engaged in the meditation upon Viṣṇu; he is calm; controlled; he is always friendly; he is always devoted to his father and mother; he is learned; he maintains his family. A good son having these qualities gives happiness (to his parents). Others having relation (with a man) cause grief and torment.

36b-38. O sinless one, what have you to do with a neutral son (giving) no fruit? All of them come in the form of sons to the worldly existence, and all of them go after giving terrible grief, O best brāhmaṇa. I shall explain all the wonderful deeds you did and preserved in the former existence.

39-53a. Listen, O you very wise one, you were in your former existence a śūdra, and none else; you were a cultivator of land, you did not have knowledge; you were extremely greedy. You had one wife; you always hated (others); you had many sons; you never gave (gifts); you never knew righteousness and perfect truth. You never gave gifts; you never studied sacred texts; you never visited a holy place; you never undertook a pilgrimage, O you very intelligent one. O brāhmaṇa, you thus repeatedly practised cultivation (of land), and O you best brāhmaṇa, you also formerly reared beasts, so also again and again you reared she-buffaloes and mares. O best brāhmaṇa, you yourself did such deeds formerly (i.e. in your former existence). Similarly, you greedily amassed much wealth. But you never spent it in a righteous way, even after seeing a worthy but feeble recipient; having cultivated land you did not give wealth (to others). O brāhmaṇa, having sold all cowdung and your cattle, you amassed large wealth. You always sold butter-milk, so also ghee and milk and curd. Infatuated by the illusion caused by Viṣṇu, O brāhmaṇa, you thought of bad times and made this money (through making things) very costly. Indeed, you, the pitiless one never gave gifts at that time. O brāhmaṇa, you never worshipped the deities. On the parvan days (in a month) you never gave wealth to brāhmaṇas. On the arrival of

the time for offering a śrāddha, you never performed one devoutly. When the forenoon of the day came, your virtuous wife said to you: "O very intelligent one, it is the time to offer śrāddha to (my) father-in-law, so also the mother-in-law." Hearing these words of them (i.e. your wife and others), you left the house and ran (away). You never realised the path of righteousness, nor did you ever listen to it. Greed was your mother, father, brother. Greed was your relatives and kinsmen. Giving up righteousness, you always preserved greed only.

53b-65a. Therefore, you became unhappy, and were very much tormented by poverty. Day by day great avarice was produced in your mind. Whenever wealth always increased in your house, you were burnt by avarice of the nature of fire. (When) at night you slept, you thought more of greed. When you reached (i.e. when it was) the day, you were always filled with great delusions. (You thought:) When (would this money) be a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand millions, a million millions in my house? Thus, a thousand, a lakh, a crore, a hundred millions, a thousand millions, a million millions (worth of wealth) was (amassed); but (your) avarice never left (you). Thus, disregarding the time, it always increased. You never gave (gifts); you never offered oblations into fire; you never enjoyed (your wealth), O brāhmaṇa. Definitely you put (i.e. buried) it into the ground. (Your) sons did not know (it). O brāhmaṇa, you always adopted other means for the acquisition of wealth. Being intelligent you always asked people. Deluded by avarice, and asking other(s) about a spade, collyrium, having discussions, and asking (others) about alchemy, you wandered alone. You always thought about formulae that would give you success. You consulted the desire-yielding gem and (others) about entering into various castes. You were burnt by the fire of avarice, you did not move happily. You were blazing with the fire of avarice, you waited, and had lost your intelligence. O best brāhmaṇa, you who were (reduced to a condition) like this, were under the influence of destiny. When your wife and sons asked about that wealth, you never told them, nor did you give it to them, and having died you went to Yama.

65b-69. I have thus told you your whole former account.

Due to these deeds, you are not having wealth, you are poor, O brāhmaṇa. Viṣṇu is pleased with him, in whose worldly existence his sons are always devoted, are of good character, endowed with knowledge, always engaged in truthfulness and righteousness. He with whom Viṣṇu is pleased, enjoys wealth, grains, a wife, sons, grandsons endlessly. Without Viṣṇu's favour a (good) wife and (good) sons are not (obtained), O brāhmaṇa, to have a good birth in a family (i.e. to be born in a good family) is (indeed) the highest position of Viṣṇu.

CHAPTER NINETY

An Account of Devaśarman's Good Deeds of Previous Birth

Devaśarman said:

1-4. You have described to me these deeds done (by me) in my former existence; for, O brāhmaṇa, I earned wealth as a śūdra only. (But) O best brāhmaṇa, how is it that I attained brāhmaṇahood? Tell me the reason for all this, O you who are proficient in sacred and profane knowledge. Birth in the Bhārata country is difficult. More difficult is to get manhood (i.e. to be born as a human being). In manhood to be born as a brāhmaṇa is difficult; and extremely difficult is to be born in a good family. There also, due to what did I get a chaste wife, knowing everything, speaking agreeably, endowed with all virtues and difficult to obtain?

Vasiṣṭha said:

5-16. O brāhmaṇa, I shall now describe the righteous deeds that you did in (your) former (existence). If you think (like listening), listen. There was a brāhmaṇa who was highly religious-minded, who was of a good conduct, who was very wise, who was a devotee of Viṣṇu, who was religious-minded, who was always solely devoted to Viṣṇu. He always roamed over the earth for bathing at the holy places. While wandering the very intelligent one came to your house. Merely on seeing

good thought was produced (in your mind), since, when the arrival of the good takes place into one's house, what is not obtained by one, O brāhmaṇa? Whatever is difficult to be obtained in the world, even the stable place of salvation (is obtained) by service to Viṣṇu. O best one, he (i.e. that brāhmaṇa) asked for a place to stay in. Your wife and you, along with your sons, gave it to him. "O brāhmaṇa, come, come comfortably to my house." Thus you repeatedly said to that holy brāhmaṇa, a devotee of Viṣṇu. "Stay here comfortably; this is your house, O you of a good vow. Today I am blessed; I am meritorious; I have gone to a holy place. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you today I have obtained the fruit of (visiting) a sacred place. You have shown me the great meritorious place where cows live." You shampooed his body, properly rubbed his feet, and washed them with water; and you bathed with the water (flowing from) his feet. You instantly gave ghee, curd, milk and many other substances to that brāhmaṇa, as you were urged by destiny. O glorious brāhmaṇa, with your wife and sons you thus pleased that brāhmaṇa, the devotee of Viṣṇu, and proficient in sacred knowledge.

17-26a. Then, in the bright morning, in the month of Vaiśākha, he who, being pleased, was going to Gaṅgā, taught you through kindness, the greatness of the bath in Vaiśākha; and he made you, with your wife and sons, bathe properly. "As in the world there is no lake like the ocean, similarly there is no (other) month like Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu. Till the month of Vaiśākha, destroying sins, does not arrive, sins remain without any obstacle in the body". O brāhmaṇa, having heard his words, you resorted (to bathing daily) in Vaiśākha, and with a pleased mind you worshipped Viṣṇu. Beginning with the eleventh day you took a morning-bath (every day) with proper rites, for the remaining five days of the month. Due to your devotion to the brāhmaṇa, you every day took bath in Revā (river) during the month of Vaiśākha. You worshipped the highest lord, the god of gods and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. You did not get (a chance) to bathe for a full month from the beginning. Thus, you could bathe (only) for five days. Due to that religious merit and especially due to the company

of that brāhmaṇa, and due to the favour of Govinda (i.e. Viṣṇu) you obtained brāhmaṇahood.

26b-27a. Due to your contact with that month, you got (birth in) this great family which is endowed with truth and righteousness difficult to be obtained (even) by brāhmaṇas.

27b-33a. You also obtained a very chaste wife born in the house (i.e. family) of Cyavana and a teacher of the Vedas. O great sage, beauty alone is a great ornament of women. The second (ornament) is good character. The third is truthfulness. Always being noble is the fourth (ornament). The fifth (ornament) is excellent religious merit. Sweetness is the sixth (ornament). The seventh (ornament)—a full ornament—is their constant great purity within and without. Devotion to the husband is the eighth (ornament). Service (to him) is the ninth (ornament). Patience is the tenth (ornament). Affection is the eleventh (ornament) of women, O best brāhmaṇa. Your chaste wife, expounder of the Vedas, is adorned with these (ornaments). You have respectfully got her due to your bathing in the month of Vaiśākha.

33b-41. Which difficult things are not obtained by bathing in the month of Vaiśākha and by duly worshipping the lord? You were deluded by attachment. Your mind was occupied by avarice. O brāhmaṇa, in the former existence you amassed wealth only. You never gave it to brāhmaṇas or to other poor people or to your relatives or sons or wife. While dying you thought of greed only. You did not give (gifts); you did not offer oblations into fire; you did not mutter (prayers); you did not die at a holy place. You did not meditate upon god Nārāyaṇa who destroys all sins. When there is wealth with a man, he becomes a miser. What is more painful than that he dies without giving (gifts). By bathing at a sacred place etc., by penance a birth in a (good) family is obtained. O brāhmaṇa, nothing except (the merit due to) the gifts stands by a man. Due to that sinful thought you were reduced to poverty. You were sonless and were always tormented by affliction. Due to the peculiar virtue of bathing in Vaiśākha even for five days and to worship of Viṣṇu at that time, and due to the company of that brāhmaṇa, O brāhmaṇa, you obtained birth in a (good) family.

42-47a. Even brāhmaṇahood is difficult (to have). A good

son, a (good) family, brāhmaṇahood, wealth, grains, excellent women, good birth and death, good enjoyments, so also happiness, always to have a strong desire to give (gifts), generosity, excellent courage—(thus) O brāhmaṇa, all desired accomplishments are had by the favour of that high-souled god, Viṣṇu. Having bathed (daily) in the month of Kārtika, or in the month of Phālguna, or in the month of Vaiśākha, and having worshipped Madhusūdana (i.e. Viṣṇu), having devoutly given presents, having enjoyed worldly pleasures, a man then goes to Viṣṇu. By taking a bath (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha, the row of sins committed in many existences disappears, as, O brāhmaṇa, darkness disappears at sunrise.

47b-54. The self-born one (i.e. Brahmā) told me these words. Viṣṇu conceived a pure idea; (so) he first brought about the rite (in) the month of Vaiśākha, to make people go to heaven, after having mentally thought (i.e. known) Yama's secret. Therefore, in this month of Vaiśākha, that has now come, having bathed in a sacred place having holy water (every morning) before the sun has risen, and having, with proper rites, worshipped Madhusūdana, and having enjoyed (i.e. having had) sons, grandsons, wealth, good fortune and desired pleasures, you will, in the end, obtain heaven. O brāhmaṇa, I have told you all that (i.e. all those deeds which) you did in the former existence. O glorious one, having known like this, especially (the importance) of Vaiśākha, bathe (daily) and with proper rites worship Viṣṇu, Govinda, Nārāyaṇa, Anāmaya, the god that should be worshipped. (Thereby) you will obtain happiness, a son, wealth and immutable Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

55-57. The best brāhmaṇa, of great prowess, instructed by Brahmā's son (i.e. Vasiṣṭha), was glad, and the magnanimous one, having saluted Vasiṣṭha there, and having taken his leave of the brāhmaṇa, went home; and the great sage spoke to his wife, Sumanā: "Due to your favour that brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) told me all the account of my former deeds. O good one, Vasiṣṭha brought to light all of them. Today only my delusion is destroyed. I shall devoutly worship Viṣṇu, after (daily) bathing in the month of Vaiśākha."

Nārada said:

58. Having heard these very pure, very auspicious words leading to an auspicious result, she, who was delighted, said to her dear husband: "You are blessed, since you have been advised by the brāhmaṇa (i.e. Vasiṣṭha)."

CHAPTER NINETYONE

Happy End of Devaśarman's Story

Nārada said:

1-6. That very wise Devaśarman along with that Sumanā took a bath according to proper rites at the very famous and holy sacred place called Kanakhala in (i.e. on the bank of) Gaṅgā in Vaiśākha when the Sun was in Aries. Observing curbs and restraints, he worshipped Viṣṇu according to the proper rites, and gave something (by way of gifts) according to his capacity. He ate food fit to be eaten during days of fast, slept on the bare ground, and practised the vow of celibacy. He became emaciated by the practice of penance like Kṛcchra (i.e. mortification of the body) and meditated upon Nārāyaṇa in his heart. When the full-moon day arrived, he gave honey, sesamum seeds etc., so also he devoutly gave food, a cow along with other presents, to brāhmaṇas, and requested the brāhmaṇas for the absence of a defect in (the fruit of) bathing there. That beautiful, chaste wife, solely devoted to her husband, every day served her husband, after bathing and worshipping Viṣṇu.

7-14. The couple, undoubtedly looking upon themselves as fortunate, went home, well-pleased. Due to the efficacy of that religious merit, he had, after some time, unlimited wealth, grains, and (other) riches. He obtained four sons who were endowed with modesty, were proficient in sacred texts, knew the ways of the world, were devoted to Viṣṇu, were solely devoted to their mother and father, whose intellect was unbounded, and who were instructed for (having the fourfold) goal of human

life, were well-known, knew the Vedas and were devoted to Brahman, who were endowed with all virtues, and were famous. The couple, having enjoyed the full rich pleasure from the sons, took, after a long time, a great (i.e. auspicious) bath in Vaiśākha, due to devotion to him (i.e. Viṣṇu) and the favourableness of their religious merit, O king. As Viṣṇu is actually said to be the lord of Vidyā (i.e. knowledge) and of Lakṣmī (i.e. prosperity), in the same way the month of Vaiśākha is dear to Viṣṇu. O sinless one, I have told you in a slightly abridged form this importance of (the month of) Vaiśākha, which, O hero, I had formerly heard from (my) father (i.e. Brahmā).

CHAPTER NINETYTWO

Citrā's Story

Sūta said:

1. Hearing these words of that Nārada, that king, being amazed, saluted him, and thinking of Viṣṇu in his mind, said (to him):

Ambarīṣa said:

2-6. How should we err about it, since by means of little exertion a śūdra behaving sinfully obtained excellent brāhmaṇahood? O dear one, to obtain brāhmaṇahood, even by means of various acts of religious merit, is difficult. (Then) how is it that the mean one obtained it (merely) by bathing (daily) during the month of Vaiśākha? O lord, even rich kings like me do not obtain the lordship of the earth by (performing) sacrifices, (giving) gifts, (practising) severe austerities, and other acts called (acts of) religious merit. That (Viśvāmitra, the) son of Gādhi obtained it after a long time and with great difficulty by practising continuously for full hundred years various kinds of severe austerities and with many efforts. How is it (then) that that sinful one belonging to the lowest caste, bereft of his own duties, poor

and non-giver obtained through this small religious merit done without exertion the essential nature of Rāma?

Nārada said:

7-12a. O king, you have told the truth. Brāhmaṇahood is very difficult to get. The ways of Dharma are subtle and difficult to understand. Strange are the deeds; strange is the thought of a being; strange are the beings; and strange are the powers of deeds. O king, at some time a good deed, done in secret, thrives due to some auspicious act. It gives great fruit even in the same existence. This is mysterious and subtle Dharma. It cannot be carried in any manner. No certainty about the time when it would give fruit is known. Whatever good deed concealed by other sins, comes from somewhere and at some place and gives a good fruit.

12b-18. In this world (the fruit of) a good or bad deed does not perish. Yet due to many auspicious acts (even) a formidable sin perishes. O king, you said that the fruit of a deed would be obtained there due to greater exertion; in that matter listen to what I say. If smallness and greatness of a deed depended on little exertion and much exertion (respectively), then there are men observing great vows and constantly doing deeds. There is great exertion to obtain the urine of a lion, a tiger etc. Therefore, in a rite the products of a cow are recommended. Thus if repetition of a deed would mean its greatness, then entering water, fire etc. would be smaller than (any) other vow. There is no rule which says this is small or that is great. The fruit of it that is laid down in sacred texts is alone its great produce, as a great thing destroys a small one or a small thing destroys a great one. The destruction of grass (i.e. hay) is seen (to take place) even due to a small spark.

19-24. O king, Ajāmila was known to be the husband of a maid servant. He had forsaken his religiously wedded wife; he constantly remained in (i.e. committed) sins. At the time of his death he called his son by his name Nārāyaṇa. And due to uttering the name (of Viṣṇu) he obtained a very difficult position (i.e. salvation). As fire though touched unwillingly (i.e. unknowingly) burns, in the same way, the name of Viṣṇu, even though it is uttered under some pretext, burns (sins). (Sins due to) myriads of killings, thousands of swearings, all thefts, crores of violations

of the teacher's wife are instantly destroyed by (uttering) the name 'Govinda' dear to Viṣṇu. O hero, whatever small good deed full of devotion to Viṣṇu is done by a learned man, would have an inexhaustible fruit. No doubt should be entertained about this.

25-33. A man having devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, would obtain whatever is desired by him. Due to devotion to Viṣṇu, children, wealth, wife, land, mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven and salvation are not away (i.e. are easy to obtain). Thus by means of a small act laid down in the sacred texts, if it is done according to the proper rites, even a great sin would perish. There is no doubt about this. O learned one, due to the excellence of the devotion and the act, there would be greater fruit. The ways of Dharma are subtle, and are difficult to be known even by the wise. This month of Vaiśākha is dear to glorious Viṣṇu. Even all alone it gives all the desired objects in the three worlds. In my view a wise one who gives gifts without sincerity even from his birth, and one who somehow bathes with the holy water of Gaṅgā at the proper place and time, is not purified. A man of wicked thoughts, though at the time of death enters fire, blazing by the sprinkling of ghee and oil with its flames turning all round, and is burnt, yet he does not obtain heaven or any other (similar) fruit. Gods live at the holy places on (the bank of) Gaṅgā etc., so also hosts of yakṣas live in temples. They, being bereft of devotion, observe fast and perish, (but) do not get the (desired) fruit. Therefore, we are not able to describe the religious merit of him who intent upon bathing (daily) and purified, would, having kept devotion in the lotus of his heart, devoutly worship Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. O king, in this context also listen to an old account.

34-44a. I shall tell you about a certain queer fruit due to the favour of the month of Vaiśākha and of Viṣṇu, viz. that a certain brāhmṇa woman obtained. Formerly there was the lord of Kānti well-known as Divodāsa. His daughter, a great gem, always best among females endowed with virtues and beauty, of a good character and charming and auspicious, and matchless in beauty on the earth, was known as Divyādevī. Her father saw her endowed with form and beauty. Seeing his daughter Divyādevī, the king became anxious as to which good, glorious bride-

groom this daughter should be given. (Thus) thinking and properly knowing the king of Rūpadeśa the king called the magnanimous Citrasena and gave his daughter to that intelligent Citrasena. O king, when the time of his marriage came, that Citrasena died due to the perversity of destiny. The religious-minded king Divodāsa thought and, O king, having called brāhmaṇas, he asked them: "At the time of her marriage Citrasena died. (Please) tell me what kind of fate she will have."

A brāhmaṇa said:

44b-58. O king, the marriage of a daughter is performed according to sacred injunctions. Another husband is enjoined by the scriptures in the case of a woman, when her husband dies, or when he forsakes her, or when afraid of a great disease he abandons her and goes away, or, O king, if he would renounce the world. Mainly it is the father who would get (his daughter) married. There is no doubt about this. This is, O king, what is ordained by the good people in law books.

The best brāhmaṇas said: "Get her married." The religious-minded Divodāsa was urged by the brāhmaṇas. The king made up his mind to get her married. O king, again he gave Divyādevī away in marriage to the meritorious, magnanimous king Puṣpasena. That king too died at the time of marriage. Whenever the glorious father (king Divodāsa), extremely afflicted, made an effort at getting her married, at the auspicious moment (of marriage) the husband died. Then twentyone husbands died at different times. Then the king, of a known valour, being firm along with the minister, called him, and the lord of the earth decided upon her self-choice marriage. Then he invited many kings and chiefs devoted to religion for her self-choice marriage. Those foolish kings disturbed by her beauty and pounded by death fought among themselves. Thus, O lord, men, those kṣatriyas perished. Divyādevī, afflicted with grief, then wept piteously. Then king Divodāsa, seeing that girl very much afflicted and weeping, saluted, with his neck (bent) politely, his family-priest knowing law, having sacred knowledge, and practising penance (and said to him).

Divodāsa said:

59. Favour me and tell me what the great sin of my daughter Divyādevī is, that has done this (mis-)deed.

Jātukarṇa said:

60-76. O hero, I shall tell you the deeds of Divyādevī done in her former existence. Listen while I am telling them. There is a holy city called Vārāṇasī that destroys sins. In it there was a very wise man named Suvīra. He was born in the vaiśya caste and was endowed with wealth and grains. His wife, O very wise one, was quite well-known as Citrā. Abandoning the family-practices, she behaved badly. She did not care for her husband, and remained in (doing) fearful deeds. She, of a wicked mind, gave up auspicious acts, and acted sinfully. She, a wanton woman, loving quarrels, always censured her husband. Always given to staying in another man's house, she wandered much. The wicked one would always find the weak point of others among the beings. She was engaged in condemning the good; she always laughed very much. She was addicted to bad company; due to her speech she was dear to people of bad conduct. She was cunning; she hated religious people; she was a liar. Knowing her to be like this, Suvīra married another (woman). That pious Vīra (i.e. Suvīra) always given to truly holy thoughts constantly enjoyed, according to pious ways, objects of senses dear to his heart and happily along with that new wife. He was honoured by that unlimitedly truthful chaste lady of a good mind. That strange Citrā, of an excellent complexion, a wanton woman, hating piety in company of (i.e. with) virtues, was driven out by him. Moving freely and being shameless she moved with her paramour. She joined those who were engaged in (committing) sins; she was attached to the job of a messenger. She was skilled in the art of a go-between of other women. She broke families and had a crooked heart. Having called a chaste woman she would urge her by words generating conviction in stories about the desire for diversion and sports. The sinful one would stir the minds of good men and women. She would cause good women to be offered to other men (than their own husbands). Thus she caused fraud, bereft of the host of pious (acts), to be done (by others). Having

thus enjoyed for a hundred years. She lived like a prostitute. Always given to sinful acts she died in course of time. She was born as your daughter Divyādevī in your house. She was (born) as a beautiful girl endowed with a (good) form, as she was urged by her destiny in the former (existences).

Nārada said:

77. Hearing these words of him (i.e. Jātukarṇa), Divodāsa was extremely amazed. The king spoke sweet words to the sage Jātukarṇa.

Divodāsa said:

78-79. When she who was of such a bad behaviour and engaged in bad acts, died, how is it that she was born as a worthy daughter of mine, whose deity is Lakṣmī's hushand (i.e. Viṣṇu) and who am born in a very noble family? And, O sage, due to which strange religious act, she doing (such) acts has obtained a lucky birth, difficult to get, in a large, royal, rich family?

Nārada said:

80. Having heard these words of enquiry of that king, the wise sage then spoke a few true and pleasant words.

Jātukarṇa spoke:

81-86. Citrā, deceiving covert, lustful paramours, bereft of wealth and intelligence, by means of strange sexual unions, and drinking poisonous drinks, went from here and became a prostitute in the very famous city (called) 'Nāga'. A certain brāhmaṇa, afflicted and troubled, (but) of a pure heart, one evening came to that city named Nāga. Not seeing any other place (for camping), the ignorant one went to the house of Citrā. (Merely) by looking at him, the prostitute very much deluded him. He was pleased by her with shampooing his feet, bathing him, offering him a tāmbūla, a seat and food, and diversions. Then he was free from dejection. Then with strange sexual unions, she, absolutely without having any purpose in view, served him well. The brāhmaṇa who was attached (to her) due to her peculiar devotion, passed the entire night with her. When, in the morning,

he was about to leave, he whose mind was somehow attached to Citrā and who was pleased by her being solely devoted (to him), with her acts and deeds (said):

The brāhmaṇa said:

87-98. O dear one, I who am pleased (by you) must do a good turn in return. I shall without any discrimination tell you my strong affliction. Listen with respect to that auspicious (act) which destroys all sins, a description of (i.e. told by) the brāhmaṇas, formerly telling a tale on the bank of Narmadā. He who in the month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun enters Aries, carefully bathes even for three days just before sunrise, is freed from heaps of sins. He who for the entire month of Vaiśākha would bathe outside (his house), and would worship Viṣṇu with due rites, also destroys his sins. A man is freed from great sins especially by such acts as bathing at a holy place and giving gifts (there) during the month of Vaiśākha. The heap of great sins freely remains in the body of a man till he gladly, at dawn, before sunrise, bathes (at a holy place), when the Sun has entered the Zodiacal sign Aries. Thus I heard from the brāhmaṇas that were talking, about the excellent boat (useful) in crossing the ocean of many sins. Nearby is the excellent river Śivadehā. To destroy that stream of sins I am going to bathe there. O dear one, if you like, or if your mind is detached (from the worldly existence) then come with me for the bath in Vaiśākha. This life, so also this extremely charming youth are transitory. They are the cause of the stay in hell, and it would be difficult for us to avoid it. You pleased me and caused me to fall into the ocean of sins, which is true even of the great who live with the wicked. What is the use of talking much in this matter? Delay for (even) a moment is not proper. I shall emancipate you also, if you have special attachment to Viṣṇu.

Citrā said:

99-100. O lord, due to luck I am having your company as a result of (my) religious merit. My mind is certainly detached. It has a dislike for the worldly existence. Indeed I have learnt in (i.e. from) the sacred texts about the company of the good. My salutation to him who is inconceivable and uncontrolled.

Jātukarṇa said:

101-109. Speaking like this and urged by the sage that Citrā, after having taken a little wealth that was there with her, then went with him. Then that brāhmaṇa also reached the body (i.e. the stream) of Śivadehā in the month of Vaiśākha, bathed (there), and the kind one gave her the joy of bathing on that day. Then the kind-hearted brāhmaṇa made that Citrā, talking beautifully, bathe according to the proper rite. When the brāhmaṇas were separately reading the Purāṇas, she gladly heard there the greatness of the bath in Vaiśākha, by merely hearing which the darkness of sins gets exhausted, as at the sunrise the stream (i.e. the heap) of darkness perishes. She, due to the bath in that holy water causing cessation of birth, of Śivatanu (i.e. Śivadehā), had her mind pure and she became spotless like the sun's lustre. There in the Revā various people longing for the end of (the visits to) the worlds and engrossed in the service to Viṣṇu plunged in Vaiśākha. The men who clean their impure bodies in (the water of) Narmadā, giving happiness here (only), especially in the month of Vaiśākha, become those who enjoy the sports of the kings of mortals. (Merely) by (one's) remembering Revā she destroys the sin (committed) from birth. When seen, she (destroys the sin) of ten existences. If somehow (someone) bathes in her, she (destroys) the sins of a hundred births. When she is resorted to, she gives (residence in) Rudra's heaven.

110-123. During the entire month of Vaiśākha that Citrā bathed in the water of Narmadā, and every day, according to her capacity, gave something to brāhmaṇas. Due to the company of the brāhmaṇa she devoutly listened to the prayer to Viṣṇu, when the brāhmaṇas there recited it. Having bathed there in the water of Revā for the entire month of Vaiśākha, and having received, according to the proper rite, (a blessing) about absence of defect from the brāhmaṇas, she lived there for a month. That brāhmaṇa named Sudeva also made a new hut there, lived in the hut due to compassion for Citrā and favouring her incessantly bathed in the water of Revā. Then after some time the brāhmaṇa died. After him, O king, Citrā also died. Due to the religious merit of (i.e. collected during) the month of

Vaiśākha she, without seeing (i.e. experiencing) the torments inflicted by Yama, became your daughter at that time only. It is the result of the acts of (i.e. done during) that (month), that she obtained (birth) in a king's family which is devoted to Viṣṇu, which is pure, and which cannot be obtained by sinners, O hero; and O best among men, her excellent name was (fixed as) Divyādevī. She is enjoying the fruit of the food, enjoyments, pleasures and happiness that she formerly gave to the brāhmaṇa, though she was associated with him as a prostitute and of that little that she gave after having bathed in the month of Vaiśākha. She is drinking cold water and incessantly eating sweet food; and, enjoying divine enjoyments, lives in the house of the lord (i.e. you); and, being tormented by pain, grief etc. enjoys whatever is given by destiny. A little of the fruit of her act, viz. that she was engaged in breaking the houses (i.e. families of men and women), has (now) come up. O hero, that beautiful woman, though a great sinner, was born as your daughter without going through the torments inflicted by Yama due to the efficacy of the bath in the month of Vaiśākha. O hero, I have thus told you the behaviour of your daughter which was due to bad acts during her entire (former) existence.

CHAPTER NINETYTHREE

Divyādevī Is Married to Vīrasena

Nārada said:

1. Having heard these wonderful words of Jātūkarṇa, the king having respectfully saluted the learned sage, said:

Divodāsa said:

2a. O sage, how would she now be free from this affliction?

Jātūkarṇa said:

2b-4. I shall tell you about a very meritorious (act) by (doing) which she would be happy. Though generally it is not

to be disclosed, I shall tell it to you. Though the act is small, it is wonderful (and) so would destroy (the fruit of) hundreds of bad acts. As due to the power of meditation upon Viṣṇu great and full sin perishes, in the same way a formidable (sin) perishes due to the (daily) morning bath and gifts (given) in the month of Vaiśākha.

5-6. As elephants flee due to the fear of a lion, similarly all heaps (of sins) perish due to morning bath at a holy place when the Sun has entered Aries and due to the eulogy of Viṣṇu. Certainly sins run away due to a (daily) bath at dawn in Vaiśākha, as serpents run away due to Garuḍa's lustre.

7-11a. Therefore, Divyādevī, after having listened to greatness of Vaiśākha, and having listened to the sin-removing eulogy of Viṣṇu, should again be given (in marriage). She will enjoy the happiness of the company of her husband. O king, that Sudeva also is born as the mighty king of the Pāṇḍya country due to the religious merit (obtained by him) by means of bathing in Revā in the month of Vaiśākha. Give him only your daughter purified like that by the (Vaiśākha) bath, and again by (her) listening to Viṣṇu's eulogy (in the month of Vaiśākha). No doubt should be entertained about this. O king, see the wonder. The fruit of a pious act is said to be the same in this world and in the next one.

Nārada said:

11b-15. Just on hearing this the king was delighted, and made his daughter perform the entire rite as told by Jātūkarṇa. He married Divyādevī to that Vīrasena only, the chief of the Pāṇḍya country and her only friend in her former birth. With Vīrasena, her friend due to her deeds in her previous existence, she who well practised vows, enjoyed many objects of senses. O Ambarīṣa, I have in brief told you a little about the greatness of Vaiśākha. What else would you like to hear?

CHAPTER NINETYFOUR

The Means of Destroying Sins

Ambarīṣa said:

1-5. O lord, I desire to hear that hymn which destroys sins (and) by merely hearing which the heap of sins melts away. I am lucky; I am favoured, that I was made to hear the auspicious rite by merely hearing which the (fruit of) bad deeds that is earned is lost; then what is wonderful there if (greater merit is earned) by auspicious ablutions in the month of Vaiśākha sacred to god Viṣṇu? By ablutions which are laid down as compulsory the heap of sins perishes. Even by the recital of his name, there would be (i.e. one would reach) his heaven. O sage, I think that which is called Viṣṇu's name is alone meritorious, great, pure, charming, to be attained in the world by good deeds only, and is present in the month of Vaiśākha. Oh! they are blessed who remember the name of Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. O (sage), tell me again his account which is pure and which is the friend of all.

Sūta said:

6. Hearing the words of the best king to whom Viṣṇu was dear, the sage was pleased, and though he was eager for having the bath in Vaiśākha, he said so because of his interest in the account of Viṣṇu.

Nārada said:

7-8. O king, it is true that this rite of sweet talk about the account of Viṣṇu between ourselves is pure; and it is superior to the holy bath in the month of Vaiśākha, as (the talk is) with you whose deity is Viṣṇu. On the earth I look upon him as the devotee of Viṣṇu, whose life is for Dharma, whose Dharma is for Viṣṇu, and whose days and nights are (spent in doing) virtuous deeds.

9-10. O king, I shall tell you a little about the fruit due to the bath in Vaiśākha. Even my father would not be able to tell in detail the entire (account of the importance of Vaiśākha), by

merely bathing in which the dead got emancipation. Sinners bathed in the superior water of Narmadā in the month of Vaiśākha.

11-17a. Formerly a brāhmaṇa who was known as Muniśarman, who was religious-minded, who was truthful, who was pure, who possessed tranquillity and restraint, so also forgiveness and contentment, who was engaged in rites in honour of the dead ancestors, who followed the injunctions of the sacred texts and the codes of laws, who was engaged in (speaking) sweet words, who was diligent in worshipping Viṣṇu, who was intent on the company of the devotees of Viṣṇu, who knew (what happens in) the three times, who was engrossed in his own duty, who was wise, tender-hearted, to whom his wife was dear, who was kind, very intelligent, who knew the essential nature of things, who was learned and dear to brāhmaṇas, while wandering for pilgrimage to the holy places went to Revā for bathing in the month of Vaiśākha and saw before him five men who were very much afflicted, who did not touch one another, whose bodies were dark, who were seated after having resorted to the shade of a bunyan tree, who, with their hearts dejected, were looking in all directions.

17b-20. Seeing them the best brāhmaṇa, being amazed, thought: 'Who are these men here in the forest, who are frightened, and whose movements are timid? They appear to be thieves, with their forms changed, and sharing one another's company. These, having dark, lustrous bodies are talking to one another'. While the best and wise brāhmaṇa was thinking like this, all (the men) came there, and remaining away (i.e. at a distance) from him, and respectfully joining the palms of their hands and saluting him, spoke clearly thus:

The five men said:

21-30a. We are looking upon you as the best, bright man, venerable due to your behaviour, chief among the kind, O brāhmaṇa. Listen to our words. You are our friend. The good are the prop of the helpless who have become sinful due to fate. The good remove the suffering of the oppressed merely by their sight. I am a kṣatriya, named Vīravāhana, and a resident of the Pāñcāla country. Through folly I killed a brāhmaṇa with an arrow hit-

ting an invisible mark, the sound of which was only heard. I was bereft of the lock of hair on the crown of my head and of the sacred thread, and was without a mark. I roamed on the earth saying, "I am the killer of a brāhmaṇa. Give alms to me who am a killer of a brāhmaṇa and who am very sinful." Thus wandering at all holy places, I have come here. O best sage, my (sin due to the) killing of a brāhmaṇa does not go away even today. O lord, doing like this I who am being burnt by sin, and whose heart is full of grief, have passed a year. O brāhmaṇa, this other one that is seen here, is a brāhmaṇa (named) Candraśarman. O brāhmaṇa, with his mind full of folly he killed his preceptor. He is said to be the killer of his preceptor due to his mind being full of folly. He lived in the country of Māgadha. He was abandoned by his kinsmen. Since then wandering due to (ill) luck, he has come here, O sage. He is without a lock of hair on the crown of his head and without a sacred thread. He is (also) bereft of the marks of a brāhmaṇa.

30b-32. I asked him his account; and the brāhmaṇa told me the truth that by him, staying in his preceptor's house, with his mind full of anger and being greatly deluded, was killed his preceptor. Burnt by that sin he lives oppressed by grief. O brāhmaṇa, this third one again is the composed Vedaśarman.

33-35a. Due to folly, and as a result of his attachment to a prostitute this brāhmaṇa became a drunkard. I asked him (his account), and he too told me everything that had taken place; (he) oppressed by mental torment told me all his acts. All people, his wife and relatives, drove him away. Smeared with that sin and wandering, he has come here.

35b-37a. The fourth one is a vaiśya, Vidhura by name, who violated the bed (i.e. the wife) of his teacher. Through ignorance he enjoyed his mother who had become a prostitute and who lived in Videha for three months. Then, having come to know the truth, he, being afflicted, moved from there and has come to this land, O sage.

37b-43a. This fifth one is a great sinner, keeping the company of sinners. Every day through greed for money he committed a sin like theft. This vaiśya filled with many sins, was abandoned by his (own) people. With his mind dejected, he, named Nanda, has come to one place. O best brāhmaṇa, none of us

touches one another by means of (having) food (together) or having the same covering, except talking to one another, O glorious best brāhmaṇa. We do not sit on the same seat; do not sleep on the same bed. Thus overpowered by grief, we went to various holy places; (but) O best sage, our formidable sin does not leave us. Seeing you, the bright one, our pleased minds say: 'Due to the auspicious sight of a good man like you, our sins have come to an end.'

43b-45a. O lord, tell us a remedy, by which our sins will perish. O brāhmaṇa, O lord, we know you to be kind and to be one who knows the meaning of the Vedas. You are certainly the emancipator of those that are oppressed and are seeking (refuge), that are repenting, and that have got (i.e. committed) sins through folly.

Nārada said:

45b-46a. Hearing these words of them, the sage Muniśarman, the ocean of compassion, said these words after thinking:

Muniśarman said:

46b-48. You have committed sins through ignorance. You are telling the truth. You are repenting. Therefore, now you deserve to be favoured by me. Listen to my true words. With my hands raised I am speaking. (Listen to) what I formerly heard from Aṅgiras in a conclave of sages. It is found in the Vedas, and is also heard from the mouth of the teacher.

49-57. Firstly you did not propitiate Viṣṇu. You have truly told it. There is no other satisfaction than eating. There is no other teacher than (one's) father. There is no other worthy recipient than brāhmaṇas. There is no god higher than Viṣṇu. There is no holy place like Gaṅgā. There is no gift like that of a cow. There is no prayer like the Gāyatrī. There is no vow like that of the twelfth day. There is no friend like the wife. There is no virtue like compassion. There is no happiness like freedom. There is no excellent stage of a man like that of a householder. There is no better conduct than truthfulness. There is no greater pleasure than contentment. There is no better month than Vaiśākha which destroys sins when resorted to according to (proper) rites and through devotion, and which is dear to Viṣṇu.

It is especially very difficult to be secured at holy places like Gaṅgā (i.e. visiting holy places like Gaṅgā is very difficult in Vaiśākha). All expiations like (sacrifices) lasting for twelve years (are easier). Sins roar till the month of Vaiśākha has not arrived. He, of a pure heart, solely devoted to Viṣṇu, who bathes in the water (of Gaṅgā) that has sprung from Viṣṇu's feet during the entire month of Vaiśākha, alone destroys all his sins. The sinners have met him for the atonement of their sins. What should people say about him?

58-60. That man who now bathes in the water of Narmadā, which gives happiness and removes sins, in this month called Mādhava, when (the Sun) is in Aries, is freed from all sins. In the month of Vaiśākha big rivers are difficult to be found everywhere. Yet more difficult (to get) is Gaṅgā, so also Revā, so also Yamunā. He who, having gone respectfully at least to one of these three, bathes there in the month of Vaiśākha, becomes sinless and would go to Viṣṇu.

61. Therefore, you who have committed sins, should, along with me, go to Revā, and bathe there in the water of Revā, the only essence of religious merit, resorted to by hosts of sages, in the month of Vaiśākha, to remove your entire fear of sins.

62. Thus addressed, all the sinners, being delighted, went with the sage to Revā, praising her (power of) working wonders.

63-66. Muniśarman who was going from there, and who was followed like that by (those) men, saw on his way eight frightened (but) fearful goblins who were making various sounds, who were moving here and there, whose hair was raised and red, whose teeth were black and who were thin-waisted. Seeing them running towards him in the forest filled with thorns and without trees and water, he, with his mind disturbed by fear, said: "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa. (O Nārāyaṇa) protect (me), protect (me)."

67-69. Hearing the words, "Salutation to Nārāyaṇa" which are the great abode of piety, they who had obtained the condition of goblins, mentally went back to their previous existence. Seeing them of a modest mind, Muniśarman speaking sweetly, said: "Who are you, O deformed men? Who has done which deed due which this deformation has been obtained (i.e. has

taken place)? How is it that all of you are afflicted like this and are fearful?"

The ghosts said :

70-77a. We are always oppressed by hunger and thirst; we are overcome with a heap of griefs. O wise one, we are cruel of heart, we have lost our power of understanding and are confounded. We who are fools and kill human beings, do not know the directions anywhere. We have told (one) grief. This is again the absence of happiness. On hearing your loud (but) delicate utterance 'Nārāyaṇa', it appears as if the morning has dawned due to the sight of sunrise. Having seen you, O brāhmaṇa, we have attained purity of nature. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you and having heard Viṣṇu's name, we have reached another existence, we have become kind. Generally the sight of a devotee of Viṣṇu removes disgrace, purifies the minds of men, and gives them courage. I am Paryuṣita by name. This sacred one is Sūcaka. The next is Śīghraga; then is Rodhaka. This fifth one is Lekhaka. This sixth one is Vāgduṣṭa; this seventh is Vidaivata. This eighth one, giving trouble, is Nityayācaka.

Muniśarman said:

77b-78a. How do you who are goblins, have names which are due to deeds (performed by individuals)? What is that reason for which you have names?

The ghosts said:

78b. I always ate sweet (articles of food) and gave stale (food) to a brāhmaṇa, (and that too) without ghee, though there was ghee (in my house).

79-88a. This impure and overanxious one by nature looked for and reported real or unreal weak points and failings of others. Therefore, he is called Sūcaka. O best brāhmaṇa, this one, when requested by a hungry brāhmaṇa, would quickly disappear. For this reason, O best brāhmaṇa, he is (called) Śīghraga. This sinful and bad-hearted one, sitting upon the top of the house, has always eaten all alone. Therefore, he is known as Rodhaka. This one has always resorted to silence and scratches the earth with (the toes of) his foot. He is the greatest sinner among us. He is

(called) Lekhaka, accompanied by (other) people. This one hates the virtues of the virtuous; (has) appreciation of virtues in one who does not have them; he attributes knowledge to one who does not have it. Therefore, he is called Vāgduṣṭa. This sinful one due to heresy does never care for manes, deities and men and for good deeds. Therefore, he is (called) Vidaivata. This one is always a suppliant; always shows real or unreal poverty; tortures beings; and is greedy. Therefore, he is (called) Yācanaka. These goblins—i.e. we—having formerly experienced torments inflicted in hells, have again become well-settled on seeing (you.) I have told you all this account about ourselves. If you believe, then ask a question. I shall tell you (something) else.

The brāhmaṇa said:

88b. All the beings that are there on the earth, are all dependent upon the food (they eat). I desire to hear about your actual food.

The ghosts said:

89-97. Listen to the food of (i.e. taken by) us, which is condemned by all beings, and on hearing about which you will always repeatedly censure us. (We subsist on) phlegm, urine, excrement, and the dirt from the bodies of women. We enjoy at those houses where purity is abandoned, and enjoy there things like burnt utensils etc. thrown out by women, and which are censurable due to dirt. The goblins enjoy in those houses where they do not worship Viṣṇu, which are controlled by women, which are without kindness and forgiveness. Goblins enjoy at that house where indecent language is used, where the women are impure, and where struggle is constantly going on. We enjoy there where the daughters (and sisters) are not honoured, so also excellent women (are not honoured), and where contact with bad people is frequent. The goblins enjoy there where no service is (offered) to Viṣṇu; where no story about Viṣṇu is (told); where there is no love for Viṣṇu. Those also in whose house goblins, being delighted enjoy, become goblins, and due to that sin become the destroyers of their own family. (Thus) O brāhmaṇa, I who am talking, get my food.

98-99a. Nothing more sinful than this can be told. Being dejected due to the condition of a ghost (i.e. due to my being turned into a ghost), I am asking you of a firm vow so that I should not continue to be a ghost, and I would be free from this existence as a ghost.

The brāhmaṇa said:

99b-105a. By means of auspicious vows like Ekādaśī etc., by means of narrations of (the tales about) Viṣṇu, by means of worshipping deities and guests, so also by means of worshipping the teacher (or the elders) etc., by means of practices followed by good people, (by observing vows on auspicious) days as told in the sacred texts and codes of laws, so also by means of performing śrāddha rites and giving gifts: as performed according to the wise by practices like these there would be no ghosts in the family. He who being polite to his kinsmen, repeatedly salutes a cow, a brāhmaṇa, a holy place, the top of the Amara mountain, a river, a big river, and the aśvattha tree, does not become a ghost in the world. That man also who, being controlled, worships (these) in this order at the holy places on (the bank of) Gaṅgā etc., has inexhaustible religious merit. Even a powerful person like me would not be able to describe it even in thousands of years. He would be free from his existence as a goblin merely on seeing (these).

105b-109. The month of Kārtika is great and is dear to Viṣṇu. The best month for austerities is Phālguna, dear to Viṣṇu. The month of Vaiśākha is Viṣṇu's month, and has Viṣṇu as its deity. The deities knew it to be the best of all months, in which all rites are accomplished. The esteemed knowledge of Brahman comes (then). (Thus Brahmavidyā) is Lakṣmī, the cause of everything, since she stays there in this month. Therefore, this month is known as Mādhava. As it is certain that among gods there is no god like Viṣṇu, similarly among all months there is no month like (Vaiśākha) dear to Viṣṇu.

110-118. Even by devoutly listening to the greatness of that month of Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) one becomes free from the existence as a goblin; then what (would happen) by performing rites (in this month)! A man who is solely devoted (to Viṣṇu) is freed from all sins merely by means of conversing with the good

resorting to a holy place, reciting (the name) Nārāyaṇa, or even by means of hearing that name. O goblins, I shall try for your freedom (from this existence as goblins), since religious merit due to doing good turns to others could not be had even by means of sacrifices. O goblins, I go to bathe in the water of Revā in the month of Vaiśākha when the Sun is in Aries. I am followed by these five men. Those five only had become the heaps of sins through folly. They will come for bath by my words, who am kind. Till then, by my order, stay there in this forest, (and be) free from grief. Going (there) and after bathing in the water of Narmadā, having fashioned men of darbha, I, bound by kindness, shall merge the helpless ones according to proper rites into the water of Narmadā in the month of Vaiśākha. Thus, there is no doubt that merely by bathing the lads made of darbha, you will be free from your existence as goblins in three days only.

Nārada said:

119-122. Having spoken like this, and being honoured by them who were firmly resolved, Muniśarman followed by these five (men) went (to Narmadā). Having gone there in the morning and having bathed there, he gave bath according to proper rites to the goblins fashioned from darbhas and by pronouncing the name (of each one of them). The goblins, remembered and bathed at the holy place by the sage pronouncing their names, became pious thereby, and being instantly free, went to heaven. When those five sinners of pale bodies, plunged by his word (i.e. on being told by him) in the water of Revā in the glorious month of Vaiśākha, they instantly became (men) of the lustre of gold only.

123-129. In the presence of all people Muniśarman made them hear (i.e. recited to them) the hymn destroying sins (and) they became men of great brilliance. But the men there did not touch them, though they were free from dust merely on bathing, due to the fear of the contact of sinners. Due to consideration for Muniśarman, and due to his religious authority, there was heard all of a sudden a divine voice: "These (men) are free from sins. What wonder is there that freedom from a heap of sins takes place in the case of those who, having Mukundy (only) as their heart and soul, have bathed in the month of Vaiśākha, and

have been here respectfully hearing the hymn removing sins? For all sinners this is a great hymn removing sins. For all sinners this is a great expiation, viz. to plunge in the morning into (the water at) a sacred place with devotion in the month of Vaiśākha, since, even those sinful goblins who were bathed (i.e. whose darbha-representations were bathed) by merely pronouncing their names, were remembered and made free by that pious Muniśarman."

130-133. Having heard these very wonderful words being (produced) in the sky, the men there instantly praised those five holy men, the month of Vaiśākha and the sage (Muniśarman) and (river) Revā. Then the king heard the hymn of praise which destroyed sins, devoutly hearing which a man is free from heaps of sins, and by merely hearing which sinners attained purity. Many others also became free from the sin caused by ignorance. When the mind of men is occupied with (copulating with) another man's wife, (snatching) another's wealth, and harming a being etc., then the expiation is eulogy (of Viṣṇu).

134-150. (One should say:) "I am always saluting Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu, Viṣṇu and Viṣṇu (only). I salute Viṣṇu who is in my mind, who is the controller, who is unmanifest, who is endless, who is undefeated, who is fit to be praised of all, who is without beginning or death, and who is powerful. Since Viṣṇu is in my heart, since Viṣṇu is in my mind, since Viṣṇu is the cause of (my) ego, since it is Viṣṇu, the author of the immovable and movable, who remains in me, therefore a sin perishes when he alone is reflected upon. Since, when reflected upon, or seen devoutly in a dream, he removes the sin, I salute that Upendra, that Viṣṇu, to whom a salutation is dear. In this propless world, I salute this eternal Viṣṇu, Madhusūdana, Acyuta, who supports my hand. My salutation to you, O lord of all, O controller, O powerful one, O supreme being, O Viṣṇu, O Hṛṣīkeśa, Hṛṣīkeśa, Hṛṣīkeśa, O Nṛsiṁha, O Govinda, O Bhūtabhāvana (i.e. cause of the beings), O Keśava. Bring to an end bad words, bad deeds and sins. Salutation to you. O Keśava, appease that very severe sin which ought not to have been done, which bad (deed) I, being under the sway of my heart, thought of. O Brahmaṇya, O god Govinda, O you who are solely devoted to the highest truth, O Jagannātha (i.e. the lord of the world), O Creator of the world,

O Acyuta, put an end to my sin. O Hṛṣīkeśa, O Puṇḍarīkākṣa, O Mādhava, let all my sins—committed in the afternoon, in the evening, in the mid-day or at night, through body, mind or words knowingly or unknowingly, perish by means of the utterance of the three names. O Hṛṣīkeśa, O Puṇḍarīkākṣa, may my sin committed through body, mind and words come to an end, O Mādhava. Let that sin which I committed while eating, drinking, standing, sleeping, keeping awake or seated, for getting money through body, mind or words, whether it is small or big, and which leads to a bad birth or to hell, be appeased by means of the narration of (the virtues of) Vāsudeva. When that Viṣṇu who is the highest Brahman, who is the highest abode and is pure, is praised, let the sin that there is, perish. That is Viṣṇu's position, having reached which the wise, free from (the sensations of) odour, touch etc. never return (to this world). Let him put an end to all that".

151-159. That man who would recite or listen to the eulogy putting an end to sins, is freed from sins due to body, mind and speech. Freed from (the influence of) evil planets, he goes to the highest position of Viṣṇu. Therefore, when a sin is committed, the eulogy crushing all sins should be muttered. Best men should recite (the eulogy)—the expiation for the streams (i.e. heaps) of sins. By means of expiations, excellent hymns of praise and vows the sin perishes. Then the deeds should be performed for excellent success, enjoyment and salutation. O lord of men, the sin committed during former existences, so also the sin committed in this world, melts away (i.e. disappears) instantly on hearing this eulogy. This is an axe for the trees in the form of sins. This is a wild fire for the fuel in the form of sins. O king, this eulogy is the sun for (i.e. dispelling) the darkness in the form of the heap of sins. I have disclosed this hymn—this secret—which I respectfully received from my father (i.e. Brahmā) to you and also due to compassion for the world. Even Viṣṇu himself is not able to describe the greatness of the religious merit of him who, O king, hears this auspicious account. Well-being to you, O great king, I am quickly going to Gaṅgā to bathe (in her water, as) this great month of Vaiśākha has arrived.

CHAPTER NINETYFIVE

More Rites and Rituals to be Observed in Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1. Then the king joyfully asked the sage, after saluting him who was ready to go for his bath, the rite in brief, proper for bathing, giving (gifts) and other performances.

Ambarīṣa said:

2-3. O sage, in this month of Vaiśākha which rite (should be performed)? Which is superior penance? Which gift (should be given)? How should a bath (be taken)? How should Viṣṇu be worshipped? O brāhmaṇa sage, please tell it (to me). You know everything, and you are dear to Viṣṇu. Tell (me) in particular about the procedure of worship at a holy place.

Nārada said:

4-7. O best one, when the Sun enters Aries in the month of Vaiśākha, a man, remembering Viṣṇu, should bathe in a great river, at the bank of a river, in a big river, in a lake, in a spring, in a natural pond, or a reservoir that he would come across by chance. Having observed a fast, on the eleventh day of the bright half of Caitra or on the fifteenth day when the Sun enters Aries, he, with the consent of a brāhmaṇa, and after having taken a good bath and having worshipped Viṣṇu, should take up the vow of the (daily) bath in Vaiśākha.

8-11. "During the entire month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun has entered Aries, I shall bathe in the morning with (certain) restraints. May the killer of (the demon) Madhu (i.e. Viṣṇu) be pleased. May my bath on every day during the month of Vaiśākha be free from difficulty by the favour of (Viṣṇu,) the killer of (the demon) Madhu and the favour of the brāhmaṇas. O Murāri, O Madhusūdana, give me the fruit (as told in the sacred works), O lord, due to my bath (every) morning in the month of Vaiśākha, when the Sun has entered Aries. O Madhusūdana, since this month of Vaiśākha is dear to you, be a giver of fruit, and a killer of (my) sins due to my (daily) morning bath during that (month)."

12-13. Having uttered these words at that holy place, having washed his feet, and being controlled in speech, he, remembering god Nārāyaṇa, should bathe according to the proper rules. A man should prepare a holy place by reciting this basic hymn: 'Salutation to Nārāyaṇa'. This is said to be the basic hymn.

14-19a. Taking darbha in his hand, having sipped water according to the rules, and having bowed, a man should fashion a quadrangular having the measure of four cubits on all sides, and should invoke Gaṅgā by means of this basic hymn: "You have sprung up from Viṣṇu's feet. You belong to Viṣṇu. You have Viṣṇu as your deity. Therefore, protect us from the sin (committed by us) from birth to death. Vāyu has stated the number of holy places to be three crores and a half. O Jāhnavī, your holy places exist in heaven, on the earth and in the intermediate region between heaven and earth. Your name is Nandinī; among gods it is Nalinī. You (are) also (called) Dakṣā, Pṛthvī, Vihagā, Viśvagāthā, Śivapriyā, Vidyādharī, Mahādevī, so also Lokaprasādinī, and Kṣemaṅkarī, Jāhnavī, Śāntā, Śāntipradāyinī."

19b-23. He should pronounce these names at the time of bathing. Gaṅgā moving in the three worlds, is present there. Having with the cavities of the hands (i.e. palms) joined and put on his head, and having put (i.e. sprinkled) water on his head four, five or seven times, then one should like that bathe with clay, after having invoked it according to the rules (as): "O you earth, O you day, O you who are trampled over by horses, O you who are trodden over by chariots, O you who are trampled over by Viṣṇu, remove my sin—the misdeed I have done. You have been upheld by Viṣṇu, (in) the Boar (incarnation), having a hundred arms. Salutation to you of a good vow, and the araṇi (the cause) of the rise of all people."

24-27a. After thus having bathed, and having sipped water according to the rules, he should stand up and wear pure, white garments. Then for the satisfaction of the three worlds he should offer libations. He should first gratify Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Prajāpati, gods, yakṣas, so also serpents, gandharvas, celestial nymphs and demons, cruel snakes, eagles, trees, creatures and birds, vidyādharas, clouds, so also those moving in the sky.

27b-29a. (He should say:) "For the satisfaction of (these

and) the beings also who have no support and who are engaged in sinful deeds, this water is offered by me." A man should wear the sacred thread on the left shoulder and under the right armpit, and wear it round the neck while making offerings to gods. With devotion he should gratify offerings to gods. With devotion he should gratify men, sons of sages and sages.

29b-51. (He should say:) "Sanaka, Sanandana, so also Sanātana as the third, and Kapila, Āsuri, Voḍhu, and Pañcaśikha also. Let all of them always be satisfied with the water offered by me." With sacred rice-grains and water he should gratify all divine and brāhmaṇa sages like Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Vasiṣṭha, Bhṛgu, and Nārada. Then he should make the sacred thread hang down towards the left part of the body over the right shoulder and then wear it on the left shoulder and under the right armpit, after going (down) to the ground (i.e. after touching the ground) with his knees. With sesamum seeds, water and sandal, he should devoutly gratify the manes like: Agniṣvātta[1], Saumya, Haviṣmanta[2], so also Uṣmapa[3], Kavyānala, Barhiṣad[4], and Ājyapa[5] also. (He should say:) "Salutation to Yama, Dharmarāja, Mṛtyu, and Antaka, Vaivasvata, Kāla, Sarvabhūtakṣaya (i.e. who destroys all beings), to Udumbara, Dadhna, Nīla and Parameṣṭhin; salutation to Vṛkodara, Citra, Citragupta." Then, with darbhas in his hand, he should gratify the manes. Having, with proper rite, gratified his manes (mentioning them) with their names and family, so also his grandsires on the mother's side, he should recite this prayer: "May all kinsmen (in this existence) and the kinsmen in former existences, desiring (libations of) water from me, be fully gratified." Having sipped water according to the rules, he should, in front (of him) properly draw a lotus with sacred rice-grains, flowers, water and red sandal. By mentioning

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1. Agniṣvātta—A class of manes who, on earth, neglected the sacrificial fire.

2. Haviṣmanta—Name of a class of manes regarded as progenitors of kṣatriyas and descended from Aṅgiras.

3. Uṣmapa—Literally, imbibing the stream of hot food; a class of manes.

4. Barhiṣad—Deceased ancestors.

5. Ājyapa—A class of manes who are the sons of Pulastya or of Kardama, and the ancestors of the vaiśya-order.

the names of the Sun, he should carefully make respectful offerings (to the Sun): "Salutation to you of the form of Viṣṇu, of the form of Brahmā, to you, O Sun, having a thousand rays, and who are all-lustre; salutation to you, having the body of Rudra; salutation to you, to whom devotees are dear. O Padmanābha, salutation to you, adorned with ear-rings and armlets; salutation to you who are the lord of all the worlds, who awaken the sleeping ones. You always observe all good and bad deeds. O Satyadeva, salutation to you. Favour me, O Bhāskara. O Divākara, I salute you. O Prabhākara, my salutation to you." Having in this way saluted the Sun, and having gone round (the lotus drawn in front of him) keeping it to his right seven times, he should touch a cow, a brāhmaṇa, and gold, and then go home. Having worshipped the (venerable ones) in the hermitage, he should then worship the image. Being restrained and self-possessed, a householder should first devoutly only worship Viṣṇu and again at both places, with devotion, and according to the rules. He who would especially worship Viṣṇu during the month of Vaiśākha, has worshipped him all the year round. He should perform the group of the vows in honour of Viṣṇu, for pleasing him, when the month of Vaiśākha has arrived and when (the Sun) the witness to (all) deeds has entered Aries. He should give many gifts like sesamum seeds, ghee etc., which destroy sins produced (i.e. committed) during crores of existences. A rich person should give, for the fulfilment of his desire, gifts like water, food, the (representations of a) cow made of sugar, sesamum etc. With his senses controlled one who bathes daily during the entire month of Vaiśākha, who mutters (prayers), who eats food fit to be eaten on days of fast, is freed from all sins.

52-60a. He who, being careful, eats once only (in a day), or eats at night, or eats without asking for the food during the month of Vaiśākha, gets all his desired objects. The rule is that one should have daily two baths outside (his house), at a river etc., according to proper rules, should eat food fit to be eaten on days of fast, should observe celibacy, and sleep on (bare) ground. (Observance of) a vow, (giving) gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, and worship of Viṣṇu burns terrible sin committed during thousands of existences. As Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu)

when reflected upon, destroys sin, similarly (daily) bath in Mādhava (i.e. Vaiśākha) done according to rules (destroys sins). A man should bathe every day at a holy place, should gratify his dead ancestors with sesamum seeds, should give gifts of jars of fragrant water etc., and should worship Viṣṇu during the month of Vaiśākha. This gives satisfaction to Viṣṇu. He should give water with sesamum seeds, gold, food, sugar, garments, ornaments; he should devoutly worship thrice a day lord Viṣṇu who is actually accompanied by pure Lakṣmī. He who gratifies brāhmaṇas with many golden pots containing sesamum seeds, or with jars full of water according to his capacity, removes (the sins of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa.

60b-81a. A man, being concentrated, should bathe in a river in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha, and worship Viṣṇu with devotion with seasonal flowers and fruits. Free from heretic talk, he should honour a brāhmaṇa according to his capacity. He should gratify him by giving gifts of garments, cows, jewels etc. and heaps of wealth, or should give him other valuable things in small quantity according to his capacity. Then, the man who has no possessions left, should worship Viṣṇu by offering him flowers in the month of Vaiśākha. He, being free from all sins, would emancipate a hundred of his dead ancestors. He would not experience grief for a hundred thousand existences. He has no fear from a disease; he is not bound by poverty. He would become a devotee of Viṣṇu, and is blessed in existence after existence. O hero, he would live in heaven for one hundred and eight thousand yugas and would again be (born) as a king. Enjoying various pleasures of a king happily, he, due to Viṣṇu's grace, then merges into Viṣṇu. O king, listen; I shall tell you in brief about the worship of Viṣṇu. (It is of three kinds:) as laid down in the Vedas, as laid down in the Tāntric works and that which is of mixed types (all of which) destroy sins. There is no end to him whose fullest extent is limitless; O king, there is no end to the rite of worship. Now it will be in due order explained properly. The worship of Viṣṇu is of three kinds: As laid down in the Vedic texts, as laid down in the Tantras (i.e. religious treatises teaching magical and mystical formularies for the worship of a deity), and mixed. The Vaidika or the mixed one is laid down for brāhmaṇas and others. The Tāntrika is enjoined

for even a śūdra who is Viṣṇu's devotee. A man having attained brāhmaṇahood as laid down in his own Veda (i.e. the Veda looked upon as most authoritative by him), should, being composed and practising celibacy, worship Viṣṇu according to the proper rite. By his teacher's consent, he should worship him on an altar or in (i.e. by offering oblations to) fire or the Sun, water, or his own heart or a brāhmaṇa, with devotion and wealth. Having brushed his teeth, he should first take bath for the purification of his body. At both times the bath should be taken to the accompaniment of hymns and with clay. The rites like the morning and evening prayers are prescribed in the Vedic texts and the Tantras. At the end of the worship he should properly fix the solemn vow to perform the observance, which purifies the rite. The image (of the deity) is said to be of eight kinds: (made) of a stone, of wood, of iron, smeared (with clay, i.e. of clay), drawn, of sand, metal and of jewels. It is of two kinds and said to be the abode of life (i.e. alive): movable and immovable. The invocation and allowing (the deity invoked) to go are not (necessary) in the case of the immovable (image) at the time of the worship of Viṣṇu. In the case of a movable one, there is an option. Both these (i.e. invocation and allowing it to go) take place on the altar (itself). In the case of that which is not smeared (i.e. which is not made of clay) bath is (enjoined). In the other case (i.e. in the case of one made of clay) only sprinkling (with water should be done). A sincere devotee should devoutly worship the deity with well-known articles as become available. O king, in the worship, bathing and decorating (the image) is best. They (i.e. articles) may be put on the altars or oblation with ghee (should be offered) into fire. Or the worship offered into (i.e. to) the Sun is the best, or on the altar with water etc.

81b-96a. Even water offered with faith by a devotee is best. Being pure, and having first got his seat prepared with darbhas, he should, after having collected material like fragrance, incense, flowers, lamp, food etc., sit facing the north, or facing the deity, for worshipping (it). Having made the nyāsas[1], he should then

1. Nyāsa—assignment of the various parts of the body to different deities, which is usually accompanied with prayers and corresponding gesticulations.

touch with his hand (the materials of) worship of Viṣṇu. He should properly make ready the pitcher (from which water) is to be sprinkled. With that water he has to worship the deity and sprinkle the materials of worship and himself. Sprinkling the three pots with water he should (fill them) with the material and offer them. He should cause to be given (i.e. should give) three pots for water for washing the feet, material of worship and sipping water. With the tuft of hair on the crown of the head, from which the (head-)dress is removed, he should consecrate them with the Gāyatrī-hymn. At the end of the recitation (of the hymn), he should meditate upon a small portion representing the life of the lord, as is (conceived) in the lotus of his heart, and cherished for the fulfilment (of his desires) on a lump made ready with air and fire. When the lump is occupied by the image as conceived by himself, he being devoted to it, should invoke the deity to the (place of) worship etc. and with its body placed there, he should worship it. He should keep ready the articles of worship like water for washing the feet, for bathing, and the materials of worship etc. Having prepared, in nine ways, a seat for Viṣṇu—a lotus with eight petals, bright with a pericarp and filaments—he should, for success at both places (i.e. in this world and in the next), worship according to the ways laid down in the Vedic texts and in Tantras, worship Viṣṇu's (disc called) Sudarśana, (conch called) Pāñcajanya, mace, sword, arrow, bow, plough, pestle, Kaustubha, garland and (the mark called) Śrīvatsa. He should also worship by sprinkling etc., at their respective places, with their faces turned towards him, Nanda, Sunanda, Garuḍa, Pracaṇḍa and Caṇḍa. So also Mahābala, Bala, Kumuda, Kumudekṣṇa, Durgā, Vināyaka, Vyāsa, Viśvaksena (i.e. Viṣṇu), teachers and (other) gods. He, Viṣṇu's devotee, should always, when he has the money (to do so), adorn Viṣṇu with sandal, (fragrant root of a plant called) uśīra, camphor, saffron, agallochum, and fragrant water, with (proper) hymns—like the Vedic Svarṇagharma, or the incantation in honour of Viṣṇu, or the hymn called Puruṣa-sūkta, so also with waving the light etc. before the deity, with garments, sacred thread, ornaments, leaves, garlands, fragrance and unguents.

96b-101a. The worshipper should give, with faith, water for washing the feet, for sipping, sandal, flowers, sacred rice-grains, perfumes, incense, and other articles to be offere. He should keep ready jaggery, rice boiled in milk, ghee, baked cake, small round cakes of flour, sweetmeats, milk, curd, ghee, and offering of eatables. Day after day there should be anointing the body, massaging it, showing the mirror, brushing the teeth, bath and all songs. In a basin as laid down according to the rules and with a round belt and altars, he should lay fire and gather it on all sides, and having diffused water with his hand, and sprinkled it, should offer fuel according to the rules. Taking the articles with holy water, he should sprinkle ghee with water used for sprinkling.

101b-119. He should meditate upon and worship (Viṣṇu) who resembles heated gold, whose four hands shine with a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus, and who is calm and who has put on a garment (soft) like the filaments of lotuses, who has put on a bright crown, bracelets, a girdle, and excellent armlets, who has the Śrīvatsa on his chest, whose Kaustubha is shining, who has put on a garland of wood-flowers. Having worshipped the wooden pieces having ghee (sprinkled over them) along with the oblation, having thrown two portions of ghee, and having sprinkled clarified butter and having offered oblation covered with ghee, having then worshipped and saluted he should offer the oblation to his associates. O brāhmaṇa, remembering Nārāyaṇa, he should mutter the basic prayer. Then having given (water for) sipping, he should keep the leftovers for Viṣṇu. Always singing and describing his deeds with words he should offer him perfume used to scent breath, and fragrant tāmbūla etc. Causing to hear and listening to good stories he should have leisure for a moment. Having praised him with hymns, and with various eulogies from the Purāṇas and Prākrita (provincial or vernacular) panegyrics, he should, (prostrating himself before him) like a stick, salute him, saying, 'O lord, favour me'. Putting his head on his (i.e. of the image) feet and joining his hands, (he should say), "O lord, protect me, who have taken refuge with you, and who am afraid of the ocean having a shark-like death." With these words he should put on his head the leftovers of the articles offered to Viṣṇu, and should cause

to stay in himself the lustre fit to be put into (his heart). A man with faith should worship wherever there is a foot-mark of the idols etc. A man should worship him who dwells in all beings and in himself also, by means of purificatory rites and abstract meditation. Due to this he obtains desired welfare from Viṣṇu. Having installed the idol, he should get constructed a strong temple, so also charming flower-garden for accomplishing the worship (of the idol), so also should (introduce) worship, pilgrimage, festivals etc. for the continuation of the worship etc. on the parvan days and also every day. Having presented a (piece of) land, a market, a city, a village etc. (to the deity) he should reach intimate union with it. By means of the installation (of the idol), one would get sovereign empire; by (building) a temple one would get (happiness in) the three worlds; by worship etc. one would reach Brahmā's heaven; and by the three he would attain similarity (with the deity). By means of firm, desireless devotion, one obtains him (i.e. Viṣṇu) only. He who worships Viṣṇu like this obtains loyal devotion. That (really) is the body (of a man) which is white due to the dust (clinging to the body) while saluting Kṛṣṇa; it is auspicious like him. Those are the very charming eyes earned by means of penance, by which Viṣṇu is seen. That (alone) is the pure mind, which is white like the moon and a conch, and which pervades Mādhava. O king, that is the tongue, speaking softly, which repeatedly praises Viṣṇu. Women and śūdras also should worship (Viṣṇu) with the basic hymn, with devotion and according to the manner advised by the teacher; so also by other devotees of Viṣṇu. I have told you all this worship of Mādhava which is purifying. O king, do it especially in the month of Vaiśākha.

Sūta said:

120. Having heard these words of Brahmā's son (Nārada), which were lovely, auspicious, and pure, the king, best among the devotees of Viṣṇu, being curious, saluted him with the palms of his hands joined, and said:

Ambarīṣa said:

121-124. I am the lord of the entire earth; my order is always obeyed; I serve the wise; I have dedicated my heart to

the lotus-like feet of Viṣṇu; I have pleased the brāhmaṇas heartily. I am the gem from the family of well-known kings; I always have a liking for piety. I am successful. I am given to (appreciation of) beauty, appearance of bravery and to charity. I am having good sons. I have conquered a host of enemies. Due to some religious merit I have been born of a pure mind, and have been associated with the wealth of such virtues. From where again have I obtained this beautiful wife, the embodiment of religious merit and resembling Lakṣmī? O sage, tell me all these good deeds I did in the former existence. O you treasure of compassion, you know everything.

Nārada said:

125-132. This one who is your extremely beautiful wife, of a good conduct, was in the former existence a prostitute named Rūpavatī. This beautiful lady, performing auspicious deeds by the direction of a brāhmaṇa, would live (i.e. lived) as a prostitute as indicated (below). You were a goldsmith known as Devadāsa. You were, in a former existence, the lord, the paramour of her (who was then known as) Rucī. This Rūpavatī remained on the path of righteousness—the best knowledge—for (i.e. while) spending money (obscure!). Once on hearing about the religious merit due to the (daily) bath in Vaiśākha she, following (the path of) righteousness bathed when the Sun had entered Aries. The diligent, beautiful, prostitute Rūpavatī, always devoutly and respectfully saluted and gave gifts to a brāhmaṇa. You, Devadāsa, bound by love (towards her) were always advised by her. You intentionally and respectfully bathed in the month of Vaiśākha. At that time, at the beginning of Tretāyuga, on having got the third day (i.e. when the third day arrived), she spoke to the goldsmith Devadāsa, with respect:

The prostitute said:

133-135. Fashion an excellent (image of) Madhusūdana, Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu). Having worshipped the deity with these barley grains and having gratified fire, I shall give it to a brāhmaṇa, with the consent of brāhmaṇas. In Purāṇas, this gift is said to be inexhaustible there (i.e. in the next world). I have heard from the brāhmaṇas that this Tṛtīyā (i.e. the third day of

Vaiśākha) is called 'Akṣaya (tṛtīyā)' of the bright half of Vaiśākha. It gives inexhaustible fruit. On this day I shall give this (image of) immutable Viṣṇu (to a brāhmaṇa).

Nārada said:

136-144. Hearing these sweet words of her, the goldsmith, truthfully and free from theft (i.e. without taking away a portion of the gold), fashioned an extremely beautiful image of Viṣṇu, thinking it to be meant for a religious purpose. She gave that beautiful image, having the characteristics of the (beautiful) moon as indicated, after she had taken bath, to a brāhmaṇa according to the proper rites, after worshipping it on that day of Akṣaya (tṛtīyā), O king. After some time, that prostitute, devoted to religion, died. Then that Devadāsa also died when (the span of) his life was over. Due to that religious merit, O king, that Devadāsa, reached (i.e. was born on) the earth as you, endowed with all virtues. That Rūpavatī too, due to that religious merit became your wife, full of love, named Kāntimatī. O hero, many desires are due to former deeds. Their courses are varied. O dear one, they are not known even by the wise. Therefore, there is no doubt that (the rites) should be performed during this month of Vaiśākha. It was kept as a secret by that god Brahmā and by Viṣṇu.

145-148. The religious merit due to the month of Vaiśākha is not obtained by those who have the company of the bad, who have no other knowledge (like that of religion), who are not restrained, who are bereft of the practices of the stages (of the human life), who have not visited holy places, who have not practised vows. The vow of the month of Vaiśākha is not (possible) for them in whose mouth the words, 'Govinda, Keśava, Mukunda, Hari, Murāri, Lakṣmī-nivāsa, Madhusūdana, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu' do not find a place. Those who do not properly listen to the words of the good, which are very beneficial, and are the nectar in the form of the deeds of Viṣṇu, and who do not see (i.e. visit) the temples of (Viṣṇu) the lord of Lakṣmī, do not obtain (the religious merit of) the vow in the month of Vaiśākha. They, who have not served their teachers, who have not given (in marriage) their adorned daughter to the bridegroom on his arrival, and who have not taught their sons the practices of

modesty etc. do not get (the religious merit of) the vow of the month of Vaiśākha.

Sūta said:

149-150. O brāhmaṇas, having thus advised the lord of men, the sage, the foremost among the knowers of hymns, took his leave, and, honoured by him (i.e. the king), went to Gaṅgā to bathe (in accordance with the vow) in the month of Vaiśākha. The king too, of a pure fame, thinking of him (i.e. Viṣṇu) only, performed, along with his wife, and with a religious mind, the rite of the month of Vaiśākha, as ordained by the sage.

CHAPTER NINETYSIX

Deeds Leading to Hell and Heaven

The sages said:

1-2. O Sūta, O Sūta, O you very wise one, live for a hundred years, since we were made to hear (i.e. you told us) what is beneficial to the world. Again talk the most. We (shall) drink your words. Again and again drinking those words, we are not satisfied, O Sūta.

Sūta said:

3-6a. In this case also there is known an old account—a dialogue between the prime world among the worlds (i.e. the Earth) and the lord of the world. The height of the Earth was six thousand yojanas and the expanse is three thousand yojanas. Thus making the Earth to have (an area of) nine thousand yojanas, he first held the Earth with his large left tooth and lifted her. He held the Earth for a thousand divine years. In course of the legendary account of religious importance she politely said to the lord:

The Earth said:

6b-11a. These twelve months and three hundred and sixty days (constitute a year). Which of these is the best, (most) auspicious, and dear to you? The month of Kārtika, when the Sun is in Libra is sacred. The month of Māgha when the Sun is in Capricorn is said to be sacred in (i.e. by) the Purāṇas. The wise say that when the Sun is in Aries, it is the (sacred) month of Vaiśākha. Mārgaśirṣa is also said to be purifying among the (twelve) months. Thus these are said to be the sacred months. Certain days also are (said to be) sacred. There are the beginnings and ends of the yugas. So also there are the beginnings of the kalpas also. Tell me the most sacred month among all the months. O you who are full of all sacrifices, O you glorious one, tell me (about) any one chosen by you.

Varāha (i.e. Viṣṇu) said:

11b-19a. I am always to be adored with devotion by those mean men who worship me in the month of Vaiśākha with or without rites. O you beautiful one, in Vaiśākha Hiraṇyākṣa was killed, so also Madhu. Having killed these two first demons, I lifted you up. The religion based on the three Vedas, and the settlement about knowledge and the castes took place in the month of Vaiśākha in Tretāyuga. Therefore, Vaiśākha is dear to me. On the third day of the bright half of Vaiśākha Tretāyuga commenced. So also the practices based on the three Vedas started, and they advanced. That day is called Akṣaya (i.e. inexhaustible) in the world. It is dear to Viṣṇu for bathing, giving gifts, worshipping, offering śrāddhas, muttering (names of the deity) and offering oblations to the (dead) ancestors. To them who worship Viṣṇu with barley-grains and carefully perform a śrāddha I give all excellent things desired by their minds. Those religious men are fortunate who give gifts, who every day worship Viṣṇu by means of various sacrifices. The fruit of him (i.e. which he gets) who worships me in Vaiśākha, is greater than (the fruit obtained) by those.

19b-27. O venerable lady, listen to the meritorious fruit of that which is done is Vaiśākha, such as a bath, gifts, muttering (hymns), sacrifice, penance, sacrificial rite and other vows. For

ten, five and seven crores of the periods of Manu they have obtained my proximity and remain without fear. Even if all the cruel Planets are situated in the twelfth and the eighth (places in the horoscope of a man) all of them become pleasing by means of the (daily) morning bath in Vaiśākha. The dead ancestors in number(s) like four of him who being solely devoted feeds brāhmaṇas in the month of Vaiśākha, are satiated by each lump of rice. Those who give very sweet foods, or meals consisting of barley-grains or with water mixed with sesamum seeds, so also umbrellas and garments, so also (shoes) capable of protecting the feet, are blessed, and give delight to Viṣṇu. Here (i.e. during the month) especially sesamum seeds with honey should be given for great religious merit and for the destruction of long(-standing) sin. Who can measure even for hundreds of crores of years the religious merit obtained by men when such (things) are done? A man (doing as above) obtains in this world the wealth in the form of sons and grandsons, long life, and whatever is desired, and in the next world he comes to me only. The series of sins of (i.e. committed during) many existences of a man melts away by bathing at dawn at a holy place according to the rites or of him who resorts to it.

28. He who, abandoning the Vaiśākha-vow, would practise some other vow, gives up a great gem in his hand, and asks for a clod.

Sūta said:

29-39. In this way the lord of the world, the mighty first god spoke in the world with reference to the month of Vaiśākha. What is the use of talking much in this matter, O brāhmaṇas? There is nothing that is not obtained by worshipping Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. In this matter listen to a very wonderful, ancient account, and the dialogue between a brāhmaṇa and the glorious Yama. In Madhyadeśa at the foot of the Yāmuna mountain between Gaṅgā and Yamunā there was a village called Mahāgrāma of brhāmaṇas. There many learned brāhmaṇas lived. Yama said to a man who was dark and tawny, had red eyes, whose hair (stood) up and whose shanks, eyes and nose were like those of a crow: "O you, go to Mahāgrāma, and having gone there, bring a brāhmaṇa, Yajñadattaka by name, who is

born in Vasiṣṭha's family, who is settled in tranquillity, who is learned and who is skilled in sacrificial rites. Do not bring the other one who belongs to the same family, (and who lives) by his side, for he has similar qualities, is like him, in learning and birth. In form and characteristics he, the best one, is like him. Bring him, I have to worship him as advised." He went and did (exactly) the opposite of Yama's order. He brought him only whom Yama had disallowed. Yama got up (when he came) and honouring him, he, knowing religious merit, said: "Take him (back). Bring that other one".

Sūta said:

40. When Yama said these words, the brāhmaṇa, disgusted with going (i.e. unwilling to go), said to Yama.

The brāhmaṇa said:

41. Why was I brought here (and) why do you impel me (to go back)? O lord, I am not at all eager to go to the mortal world again.

Yama said:

42-46. Here the meritorious persons whose life has ended, would stay. This is known as Dharmaloka, belonging to Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama). This entire land is full of happiness. I am Dharmarāja, its lord; I give the beings happiness or unhappiness according their religious merit or the opposite of it. I am of the form of Yama who gives hell (i.e. who sends to hell) the sinful men. In the same way I am religious merit embodied, who gives heaven to the meritorious. O brāhmaṇa, today only go (back) to your house as you had come (here). Still ten years' span of your life remains (to be enjoyed). When your life comes to an end, you will obtain this world. You (may) ask anything else that you want to ask. I shall explain it to you.

The brāhmaṇa said:

47-49a. Tell me (about) that great religious merit, having done which heaven would be (obtained). In deciding what is religious and what is irreligious, you are the authority, O god, I

have duly to go back to my house, then tell me due to which act men fall into hell. Please tell me (also) all that by which men go to heaven.

Yama said:

49b-76a. Those men who are averse to religion through their deeds, mind and words, and who are without (i.e. who do not have) devotion to Viṣṇu, go to hell. Those men who look upon Brahmā, Śaṅkara and Viṣṇu as different (from one another), and who are detached from knowledge about Viṣṇu, go to hell. That man who, through lust or delusion, gives up the act proper for his family or country, and would do something else, goes to hell. A man who worships what should not be worshipped, and does not worship what should be worshipped, and is disinterested in the knowledge about Viṣṇu, suffers in many hells. That sinner who dies as a wealthy man without giving to his dead ancestors, deities, brāhmaṇas, or his mortal relatives, goes to many hells. He who discriminates in (the distribution of) food, when all kinds of food are ready, and eats without making an offering to all deities, goes to (lives in) hell for a long time. O brāhmaṇa, those rich men who earn wealth by too much deceiving beings and the religious hypocrites experience grief. Those who, when proper time has come, do not devoutly offer śrāddha through atheism or greed or delusion are roasted in hell. That sinful man who causes obstruction when wealth is being given to brāhmaṇas, would go to hell. That man who, when the presents made in common, being deluded, takes them all alone, and who is inclined to atheism, would live in the abode of hell. His not being patient with other's virtues would be the cause (of his falling into hell). The great sin that has arisen is the cause of (his falling into) hell, who, after (some) time abandons his faultless, good-hearted wife and goes (away). That man who would not support their glory would fall into hell. That man who, being deluded, describes impiety as piety, is a sceptic, is an atheist, lives in hell. That man who has one idea in mind, and would speak in a different way, and would make the heart (of another person) displeased, would live in hell. Those men who, having showed disrespect for the narration (of the virtues) of the lord, go to the terrible hell due to

that sinful deed. Those who, even after seeing the door of (the temple of) the lord or (even after hearing) his name or the sacred text or (even after seeing) his attendants, do not salute etc. become the residents of hell. Those men who torment their wives without their faults, or abandon their good wives, go to hell. The man who does not listen to the words of his teacher or to the sacred texts, and who torments the hearts of others dwells in hell. Onewho feeds his own belly with sweets while his relatives andchildren are looking on, is merely a glutton, and goes to hell. The atheist who would not take bath in the morning in rivers etc. (when the Sun is) in Libra, Capricorn or Aries, would live in hell. O brāhmaṇa, he who does not, through love or respect, stand up on seeing Viṣṇu's devotee, is the guest in hell (i.e. goes to hell). Those who obstruct the ways by means of (pieces of) wood, spikes or darts or stones, go to hell. Those who do not reflect upon Viṣṇu, the first god, the controller, the great lord of the entire world, go to hell. Those men who cut off the livelihood of (a man through) farming, who break a family, who cut off (the bond of) love, so also (of) hope, go to hell. That foolish man who would test the brāhmaṇas who are distressed for want of livelihood, and who have come for eating food, should be known as a guest of (i.e. would go to) hell. Those fools who do not show compassion for a forlorn, poor, old devotee of Viṣṇu, afflicted by a disease, go to hell. Those who have not restrained their senses, having taken up vows, and who later give them up, go to hell.

76b-100. O brāhmaṇa, listen as to how the kind men go to heaven. I shall tell something in brief and through respect for you. This is (what) the ancient text (says): "Those who worship god Hari, Jiṣṇu, the ancient Viṣṇu, the unborn Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa, the four-armed Viṣvaksena (i.e. Viṣṇu), who meditate upon the divine man, and remember Acyuta (i.e. Viṣṇu), obtain the position of Viṣṇu. Narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu—this alone is auspiciousness, this alone is earning money, this alone is the fruit of life. By means of the narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu, the god of gods and of unlimited lustre, sins melt away as darknees (melts away) at daybreak. Those men who, full of faith, every day sing the verse about Viṣṇu, and who are always engaged in their own duties, who, having given up

all worldly occupations, glorify Viṣṇu only, go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, the fearful messengers of Yama do not approach the men who, even though they are sinners, are devoted to the muttering of prayers. They do not see anything else in case of the beings except the narration of the virtues of Viṣṇu, which is an expiation putting an end to all sins. Those men who, when solicited, are delighted, who, having given gifts, speak agreeably, and who abandon the fruit of gifts (made by them) go to heaven. Those mortals who avoid sleep by day, who put up with everything, who are the asylums on the parvan days, go to heaven. Those men who never mention the faults even of their enemies, (but) mention their virtues (only), go to heaven. Those men who, having seen the wealth of others are not distressed through jealousy, (but,) being delighted, congratulate them, go to heaven. Those who, of a firm resolution, show respect for the statements in the sacred texts, in active worldly life or in resignation of worldly acts, go to heaven. Those men who, born in any family, are kind, successful, tender, and of a good behaviour, go to heaven. Those men who, being pure and good, never take delight, through act, mind, or words, in the wives of others, go to heaven. Those men who knowing their capacity, always do the acts that are laid down (in the sacred texts), as told (in the sacred texts), go to heaven. He who always has faith in the religious act performed mentally, physically, or through words, and who is liked by the good, would become a guest in (i.e. goes to) heaven. That man who puts up with the impulse of his speech, his mind, his belly or his generative organ (i.e. impulse of sex), becomes a resident of heaven. Those wise men who take delight in virtues, whose speech is (directed) towards the sacred texts, whose mind is (interested) in true spiritual knowledge, go to heaven. Those men who preserve their vow from (the influence of) anger, who protect wealth without (being influenced by) jealousy, who preserve their knowledge from (being influenced by) pride or insult, and preserve (i.e. keep) themselves (away) from faults, who keep their mind free from greed, from lust, who protect (i.e. keep away) piety from (the influence of) bad company, go to heaven. Those men who, on the eleventh day of the bright or the dark half of a month are engaged in observing a fast, go to heaven. The day

of Ekādaśī (the eleventh day of a fortnight) is created as a mother for all children, as a medicine for the sick, and for the protection of all people. There is no other protection for the feet like Ekādaśī (since it makes one go along the right path).

101-110. Men fasting on that day according to proper rules, go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, having quickly shaken off the sin committed by the eleven organs of sense and action, a man, being pleased, would go to heaven. Thousands of horse-sacrifices and hundreds of Rājasūya sacrifices are not equal even to the sixteenth part of the Ekādaśī-fast. All sacrifices, all holy places and austerities, gifts like the great gifts are on one side, while the vow (in honour) or Viṣṇu is on the other side (i.e. the sacrifices etc. do not stand comparison with the vow in honour of Viṣṇu). The creator had weighed together the religious merit due to the vow (in honour) of Viṣṇu and the religious merit due to sacrifices etc. The former would be heavier. O brāhmaṇa, I do not control those who are devoted to Viṣṇu's day (i.e. the eleventh day of the lunar fortnight) and who talk endlessly about Viṣṇu; I am especially afraid of them. Their son or their grandson who observes a fast on the eleventh day strongly emancipates, along with himself, a hundred men (of his family). Therefore, a man should observe a fast on the eleventh day of both the fortnights. He is the only abode of enjoyment and salvation. Jayā, Vijayā and Jayantī, Pāpanāśinī, Trispṛśā, Vañjulī, and the excellent Pakṣasaṁvardhinī, the other one to be known as Tiladugdhā, so also Akhaṇḍadvādaśī, the one called Manorathā, so also the excellent Bhīmadvādaśikā—these are the many varieties of Dvādaśī (the twelfth day of the lunar fortnight).

111-114. Those who are capable of (observing) these vows have remained in Brahman. Those who listen to religious texts, are convinced of piety, who do what is agreeable to children, go to heaven. The dead ancestors of those men who on one day—on the new-moon day—of every month, are engaged in the vow of a śrāddha, are gratified; and they are blessed and go to heaven. Those good men, when suitable meals (are ready), respectfully offer eatables without changing the complexion on their face (i.e. without showing unwillingness), go to heaven.

115-117a. Those men who are bereft of truth and even full of passion, (but) are devoted to Madhusūdana, Nārāyaṇa, the

lord of everything, having endless religious merit, go to heaven. Those who, of a good conduct and solely given to bathing and giving (gifts), resort to Vitastā, Yamunā, Sītā, and the auspicious Godāvarī river, never see the path to hell.

117b-120. Those who dip in Narmadā, giving happiness in this world, and are even pleased at her sight, go, after having shaken off their sins to the world of the great lord, and enjoy there for a long time. Those men who, for three nights (i.e. three days) have bathed at the bank of Carma-river, and especially in the hermitage of Vyāsa, are said to be the residents of heaven. Those who die in the water of Gaṅgā, at Prayāga, Kedāra and Puṣkara, in Vyāṣa's hermitage, Prabhāsa, go to Viṣṇu.

121-124. Those who die while practising abstract meditation at Dvāravatī, Kurukṣetra, and those who have the letters 'Hari' in their mouths, are not reborn. O brāhmaṇa, those who have stayed, even for three nights, at the city of Dvāravatī, and take bath at the bank of Gomatī, are blessed, and are dear to Viṣṇu. Those who have stayed at the abode of Nara and Nārāyaṇa, and have resorted to Nanda on the earth for three nights are dear to Viṣṇu. O brāhmaṇa, those men who have lived near Viṣṇu for six months, have indeed become one with Viṣṇu, and would remove the sin (of a person) on merely looking at him.

125-127a. Those men who bathe in the water of Maṇikarṇikā, the holy water secured after many existences, and having reached Kāśī salute Viśveśa, are venerable even to me. Those men who die according to the sacred command after having worshipped Viṣṇu on the earth with darbhas and sesamum seeds, after having spread sesamum seeds on the ground and after having given iron and milch cow (to a brāhmaṇa), go to heaven, O brāhmaṇa.

127b-142. Those who die after having produced sons, and having installed them on the position that has come down from the father, grandfather etc. (i.e. which is hereditary), and who are not having the feeling of mineness and egotism, also go to heaven. Those men also who have turned away from stealing, and who are content with their own wealth, who derive their livelihood due to their good luck, go to heaven. Those men, who, at the time of welcoming (a person) speak gentle, sweet and natural

words, not afflicting (the person) go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa, those men who know the consequence (of their deeds) on the heaping up of the fruits of their auspicious or inauspicious deeds, go to heaven. Those men who increase the enthusiasm of those who are occupied with (earning) wealth and religious merit and follow the path of righteousness, are delighted in heaven. He who gives fire (i.e. warmth) in the cold season, so also he who gives water in summer, who gives shelter in the rainy season, is delighted in heaven for a long time. He who devoutly offers a śrāddha at all auspicious times, also at the time of all regular and occasional rites, enjoys the world of gods. Giving gifts to a poor man, forgiveness in a lord, penance of the young (i.e. in youth), silence of the learned, cessation of desires in the case of those used to happiness, and compassion to beings, take (men) to heaven. The connection (of a being), with deeds is twofold: it is due to sin and to religious merit. The decision in this matter is done only after resorting to truth only. Penance accompanied with meditation leads to the crossing of the ocean of the worldly existence. Sin is said to lead to a fall. This is true. There is no doubt about it. That (merit) of a man, void of religious merit, and (though) endowed with might, service and valour, melts away with force. In the difficult places on the mountains there are tall and well-nourished trees. Though dense, they fall along with their roots due to the force of wind. Similarly, those who do not practise truth, go to Yama's abode. Everything else is common to all beings. Righteousness alone is the strength (that differs from individual to individual), due to which a being is rescued in this world and in the next world. I have narrated to you in brief all this giving (i.e. leading to) the path to heaven. What more do you desire to hear?

CHAPTER NINETYSEVEN

More Sinful and Meritorious Deeds

The brāhmaṇa said:

1-4. Even a fool knows that a man doing auspicious deeds does not go to hell; in the same way a man engaged in doing sinful deeds does not go to heaven. By those skilful in (good) conduct is obtained the happiness of heaven by means of various sacrifices, and desired vows, gifts, muttering of prayers and truthfulness. Heaven is obtained by sages who have the wealth of knowledge and (good) conduct and who are the masters of the Vedas, due to religious merit and not by means of sacrifices. By a man who is attached to his family, even though having much wealth, much wealth in charity cannot be given without (i.e. unless he has) liberality.

5-9. In Kaliyuga the rites especially like Agnihotra (keeping the sacred fire continuously) are difficult to perform. O lord, the merit due to charity also is thought to be difficult. O you who show what is righteousness and what is non-righteousness, especially tell me that by which pious acts of little exertion religious merit can be stored. So tell me that pious act, the best among all such acts, having done which the entire sin is exhausted, due to which wealth, grains, glory, religious merit, and (span of) life increases, by which there would be intimacy in the mortal world, and heaven would be inexhaustible (i.e. would be obtained permanently), by which actually Nārāyaṇa, causing fearlessness to his devotees would be pleased. Due to his favour desire is on the palm of the hand (i.e. can easily be controlled).

10-13. O Yama, tell me that (rite) by which a fruit greater than that of all sacrifices, penance, gifts, resorting to sacred places, is obtained. If I am to be favoured by you by means of teaching me about religious merit, then please tell me that which is the essence of all pious acts. The wise ones have, after recollecting, narrated the expiations of sins as and when (they are to be taken). O god, it is not possible for men to do each one of them. So if there is (only) one pious act that would remove all sins, then tell it (to me).

Sūta said:

14. Having spoken thus, the best brāhmaṇa, being self-subdued, and desiring to know the subtle moral merit, praised Yama who was Righteousness embodied.

The brāhmaṇa said:

15-23a. Salutation to you, who destroy everything. Salutation to you, O lord of the worlds. Salutation to you of the form of a god, who give (i.e. show) the path to heaven, who are of the nature of the sacred texts; salutation to you, O Dharmarāja. You protect the earth, the gods, the atmosphere, the heaven, (the worlds like) Mahas, Jana, Tapas, and Satya. So also everything is protected by you. There is no world—immobile or mobile which is devoid of you. The world seized by you instantly perishes. You are the soul of all the beings. You have the nature of goodness. You are the rajas (i.e. passion) of the rājasa people (i.e. people endowed with the quality of rajas or passion). You are the tamas (i.e. the quality of darkness) of the tāmasa ones (i.e. those who are endowed with the quality of darkness). Of the quadrupeds, O god, you are one having four horns and three eyes. You have seven hands; you are bound in three ways; salutation to you, O you of the form of a bull. Righteousness, full of all sacrifices, is the expansion of your body. O lord of the worlds, you are (now) actually seen (by me). O god, my repeated salutations to you. Remaining in the hearts of all you are the observer of religious merit and sins. Therefore, you are the ruler of the beings. O god, you are a donor and a controller. O god, you are the founder of righteousness. On the earth you hold the sceptre. Tell me the well-determined essence of all the meritorious deeds.

Yama said:

23b-29. O brāhmaṇa, I am especially pleased with your eulogy. So also, O best one, you are respectable to me due to your following the practices laid down in the sacred texts. O brāhmaṇa, I, being pleased by your modesty shall tell you the great secret of me, though it should not be told, which I have determined after taking out the essence of all (sacred words), which greatly banishes (i.e. takes out one) from the group of

great hells. Those Purāṇas and sacred texts are for (i.e. lead to) the delusion of the mobile and immobile world. Let them speak about that great deity only in their sacred precepts and rites. (But) in the established view of the thinking people Viṣṇu alone is decided to be the lord when (the views of) all sacred texts are put together. Śiva, Brahmā and Viṣṇu—these three only are looked upon as the Trinity. As the lamp is (burning) due to fire, the wick and the oil, in the same way, O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu (shines with these). Having devoutly propitiated Viṣṇu, a man should obtain the auspicious Goloka. When Viṣṇu is propitiated, all desires remain on the palm of the hand.

30-32. O brāhmaṇa, of all pious acts giving (gifts) alone is the greatest. Sin perishes by means of giving (gifts), and everything is obtained through giving (gifts). Giving (gifts) is said to be of five types: regularly prescribed, occasional, optional, and the other one is of the nature of prosperity, and the last one is the highest (type of) charity. Something should be carefully given in the morning, in the noon and afternoon. This is said to be regularly prescribed.

33-41. A man, desiring his well-being should not pass a day without (giving gifts). Gift given (by the members) in a family, stands by here or there (i.e. is useful in some way or the other). In him who, being thoughtless, would, through folly eat (all alone) I produce a disease keeping off his enjoyments. That door contented with the deeds (of the inmates), giving great trouble, having gentle breezes (i.e. not fully opened for guests), is tormenting. Those who have not given to brāhmaṇas and gods at the three times (of the day), and who eat (all) alone, have (indeed) committed great sin. I purify them by means of fearful expiations and fasts like those that dry up the bodies etc., O brāhmaṇa. As the shoe-maker would mercilessly cleanse the hide in the bowl by means of whips etc., or would tear open a bad substance, similarly in the form of a physician I purify a sinner by means of proper use of herbs, and by means of astringent, bitter (medicines), hot water (etc.) tormenting him, and in no other way. There is no doubt about this. Before him (i.e. in his presence) others enjoy pleasures as desired by them. What should I do? I am capable. He has not given excellent

gifts. In the form of a great disease he would be prohibited (from enjoyments).

42-43a. O brāhmaṇa, the sinners have not with faith and capacity, given the gifts which should be regularly given. I will burn with terrible means, those who have come like that (i.e. without giving gifts).

43b-51. Before (i.e. to) you I shall explain the occasional gifts. That gift which is carefully given when the day of Mahāparvan has come, or when one has reached a sacred place, or on a day like the death-anniversary of a dead ancestor, or in months like Vaiśākha, is called occasional. I shall explain to you the time of an optional gift, which gives fruit, has a vow etc. for its object and which is intended (to have) the desired fruit. A man overcome with a feeling of devotion, gets the fruit like that (gift) (i.e. proper for the gift) due to the purifying (nature) of the gift which is duly said to be harmonious in all its constituents. I shall (now) explain (the gift) called *Abhyudaya* (i.e. leading to prosperity), which is said to be in the sacrifices etc., so also the rites like the ceremony performed at the birth of a child or thread ceremony or marriage; O brāhmaṇa, the gift of the nature of (i.e. leading to) prosperity is said to consist in careful installation of a flag, (images of) deities in a palace etc. It brings about growth in progeny, and gives enjoyments, glory, and happiness in heaven. And (now) I shall explain the last (kind of) gifts. O best brāhmaṇa, listen. Realising the loss of sex (i.e. sexual desire) and being oppressed by old age, a man should carefully give gifts. He should entertain hope about nothing.

52-58. 'What will happen to these my sons, wife, relatives, brothers (and sisters) and my friends without me when I die? How shall I again continue to live like a poor man?' Thinking like this, he, a fool bound by hundreds of bonds of hope due to his (ill) luck only, dies; and then his sons weep. Being oppressed by grief, and with their hearts full of confusion, they do not devise even a small gift at that time. When this time has passed, and when their great grief has gone, they forget (to give) the gift, or through delusion, do not give it. Knowing that the father is dead, the bond of love recedes. O brāhmaṇa, he who is dead, and who is controlled by Yama's nooses, who is over-

come with thirst and hunger, who is very much oppressed by many agonies, is, for a long time, roasted in an awful hell.

59-68. Therefore, there is no doubt, one should give gifts. To whom do the sons and the grandsons belong? To whom does the wife or the wealth belong? In this world nobody belongs to anybody else. There gifts should be given. O brāhmaṇa, one should according to one's capacity, give various gifts like a drink, food, tāmbūla, water and gold also. So also garments, a cow, a (piece of) land, an umbrella, vessels etc. in many ways. So also fruits and grants of land. No doubt should be had in this matter. O brāhmaṇa, I shall describe to you the characteristics of holy places. (These are) the holy places: This Gaṅgā that appears (here), holy Sarasvatī, Revā and Yamunā, the river Tāpī, so also Carmaṇvatī, and excellent Sarayū, Veṇī, and Pūraṇā, the destroyer of sins. Other are: Kāverī, Kapilā and Viśalyā, Viśvatāriṇī, (the river) known as Godāvarī, Tuṅgabhadrā and Gaṇḍakī. The river Bhīmarathī is said always to cause fear to sins. Devikā and Kṛṣṇagaṅgā, and other excellent rivers—these become, in many ways, the holy places on auspicious occasions. Rivers, whether they are in a village or in a forest, are everywhere purifying. Rites like a bath, giving gifts should be done there only. O brāhmaṇa, when the name of a holy place is not known, then these words should be uttered: 'This is a great holy place of Viṣṇu'.

69-73a. There is no doubt that everywhere the (presiding) deity of a holy place is Viṣṇu. One who wants to secure (salvation) should remember the name 'Nārāyaṇa' at the holy places. The proper fruit of the holy place is produced merely by Viṣṇu's name. There is no doubt that a man should give Viṣṇu's name to those holy places and deities which are not known. All sanctifications are auspicious. An ocean, lakes like Mānasa, springs, small pools etc., so also all small rivers become holy places due to the name of Viṣṇu (being given to them). The mountains are of the nature of holy places, so also a sacrifice and the sacrificial ground.

73b-81. That (place) where learned brāhmaṇas have remained with eagerness, is alone said to be a very great holy place, removing all sins. Śrāddha, the place where a śrāddha is offered, a temple, a sacrificial ground, the place where the proper sound

of (the recital of) Vedas (is heard), where auspicious tales about Viṣṇu (are narrated), one's own house endowed with religious merit, so also the holy place of cows, a forest where there is the Aśvattha tree, a place where there is a sanctifying dwelling—all these and others are holy places, so also one's mother and father. There is no doubt that that place where (food) is cooked for moral merit, where the teacher himself stays, where there is a chaste wife, is a holy place. That is his holy place set up for his liberation, where his son, learned and interested in piety (lives). These and others are the holy places, so also the king's palace. It is certain that at these and other holy places, nobody among all the human beings would obtain anything, anytime, without propitiating Viṣṇu, the giver of everything. Children, wealth, wife, a high mansion, horses, elephants, pleasures, heaven and salvation are not away (from a man) by means of devotion (i.e. when he is devoted) to Viṣṇu.

82-89a. Nārāyaṇa is the highest god; he, Janārdana, is of the nature of truth. That highest lord, dividing himself into three parts, created (everything). The lord became united with Rajas (i.e. activity) and Tamas (i.e. darkness or ignorance). The lord had Rajas and Sattva (i.e. goodness) more (than Tamas). In the lotus in his navel he created Brahmā. The lord created Rudra possessed of Rajas and Tamas. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas (together) are said to be the Trinity. Due to Sattva a being is freed. Sattva is of the form of Viṣṇu. A man with Rajas joined with Sattva would be rich and superior due to glory. That which practises the rites by alluding to the Vedic words is known as Rudra (and) is said to be distinctive of men. Due to that a man would be a king in the world, and again due to Rajas and Tamas. Those practices which are bereft of Rajas (i.e. activity) and are only Tāmasa (i.e. done through ignorance), give (i.e. lead) men (to) a difficult situation in this world and in the next world. He who is Viṣṇu, is himself Brahmā, and he who is Brahmā is himself Śiva. In the sacrifice all the three gods are present. Worship should daily be offered to the (three) gods.

89b-101. O best brāhmaṇa, he who differentiates among these three, is a sinner, is of a sinful mind, and would have an undesirable mode of existence. O brāhmaṇa, Viṣṇu alone is the highest Brahman. Viṣṇu alone is the world. This month of

Vaiśākha is said to be dear to him in (i.e. for) all rites, and gives the fruit of the great sacrifices like the horse-sacrifice. It is excellent for a bath at a holy place, penance, giving (gifts), muttering prayers and sacrifices. O brāhmaṇa, those who, when the Sun has entered Aries, continuously bathe at daybreak in a river, and worship (him) at a holy place, do not get punishment from me. Again and again killing the stream of sins before me, again and again destroying the writing of Citragupta, again and again bathing in the month of Vaiśākha, men emancipate their ancestors from sins. This great secret cuts off fear. Therefore, it is not disclosed. It is the cause of expulsion from the abode of hell and the cause of the end of my authority. Bhāgīrathī, Narmadā, and Yamunā and Sarasvatī, Viśokā and Vitastā are to the north of the Vindhya (mountain). Godāvarī, Bhīmarathī, Tuṅgabhadrā and Devikā, Tāpī and Payoṣṇī are said to be to the south of Vindhya. He who would duly bathe in the morning in (any) river, has plunged into these twelve rivers. All rivers are holy; all excellent mountains are holy; all abodes (of deities) are holy; and resting places in the forests are holy. They are seen to have been plunged into by him, saluted by him, and very much resorted to by him, who, being controlled, would bathe in Vaiśākha where the Sun has half-risen. O brāhmaṇa, his religious merit cannot be described even if one has thousands of thousands mouths.

102-107. O best brāhmaṇa, it would be possible to describe the fruit of Vaiśākha if one would have a long span of life (given) by Brahmā. As Viṣṇu is the fire dragging (one away) from hell, in the same way the month of Vaiśākha, properly observed, would burn sins (committed during) thousands and hundreds of crores of kalpas, like the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder, illicit intercourse, sin committed willingly or unwillingly, a secret minor sin, great commingling (of castes), the great sin of loss of caste, so also (giving gift to) an unworthy person, sin causing filth and confusion due to speech, mind and body. He who would worship Viṣṇu in Vaiśākha, would live in Viṣṇu's city.

CHAPTER NINETYEIGHT

The Greatness of Vaiśākha

Sūta said:

1-3. Having heard these words of that Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama), the brāhmaṇa again asked him about the auspicious rite of Vaiśākha.

The brāhmaṇa said:

O magnanimous Dharmarāja, you have properly disclosed the secret of the religious merit due to a bath in Vaiśākha which gives salvation to men, and is great. Tell me the manner in which a man, being calm and having bathed in the morning, should worship the god (Viṣṇu) and with which flowers in the month of Vaiśākha.

Dharmarāja (i.e. Yama) said:

4-11a. Of all kinds of leaves Tulasī is dear to Viṣṇu. Holy places like Puṣkara, so also rivers like Gaṅgā and gods like Viṣṇu live in the leaf of Tulasī. Always and at all times Tulasī is dear to Viṣṇu. Leaving the flower of jasmine and abandoning a lotus, and taking a Tulasī leaf a man should devoutly worship Viṣṇu. Even Śeṣa would not be able to describe the fruit of the religious merit due to it. All that—plucking a Tulasī leaf in honour of a deity or for a rite in honour of the dead ancestors without bathing—becomes fruitless. (Such a man) becomes pure by (drinking) the five products of a cow. As yellow myrobalan removes diseases, so Tulasī quickly removes very many sins like poverty and experiencing calamities. A man, a devotee of Viṣṇu, who especially worships Viṣṇu with (leaves of) Tulasī called Kṛṣṇagaurā, would become Viṣṇu. He who, being restrained, would worship (Viṣṇu) the killer of Madhu at three times of the day during the entire month of Vaiśākha, has no rebirth.

11b-17. A man should always worship Viṣṇu even with food etc. if flowers and leaves are not available, or with rice grains or wheat. He should gratify, after bathing in the morning, with proper rites deities, dead ancestors and men along with the mobile and the immobile. He who always would sprinkle profuse

water at the root of the Aśvattha (tree), and would go round it full of all gods, or he who would worship with water god Aśvattha on all sides, has liberated a myriad (members of) his family. There is no doubt about it. All griefs like poverty, misfortune, bad dreams and bad thoughts melt away by gratifying Aśvattha, O dear one. He, the hero, who would worship Aśvattha has gratified his dead ancestors, has worshipped Viṣṇu; he alone has worshipped the Planets. He should touch white flowers, so also śamī (leaves), fire, sandal, Sun's orb and Aśvattha tree, and then should perform the duties of his caste.

18-21a. After scratching (the body of a cow), giving a morsel to a cow, after having bathed and gratified a pippala, and having worshipped Viṣṇu, he would not face misfortune. A woman or a man, though quite weak, who, observing rules already stated, bathes according to her or his capacity in the morning for the three days of Vaiśākha—the thirteenth, the fourteenth (of the bright half) and the full-moon day, gets free from all sins and obtains inexhaustible heaven (i.e. obtains heaven eternally).

21b-26a. If a man, being restrained and pure, gets up on the three nights (i.e. the days, viz. the twelfth, the thirteenth and the full-moon day), and feeds, according to his capacity, ten brāhmaṇas, and, offering white or black sesamum seeds with water to twelve brāhmaṇas, would perform a solemn observance saying 'May Dharmarāja be pleased with me', and would gratify the dead ancestors and gods, (then) the sin committed by him during his life perishes at that moment only. He would happily stay in heaven a myriad after a myriad (years). He, honoured by all deities, would not see me only. O brāhmaṇa, he who, to gratify the dead ancestors and deities, devoutly gives cooked food, jars full of water etc. on the three days, viz. the thirteenth, the fourteenth (days of the bright half) and the full-moon day, is freed from great sins.

26b-28a. He who, every day, would gratify brāhmaṇas with golden vessels full of sesamum seeds and water, destroys (the sin of) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. The sesamum seeds created by Brahmā should be given on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha with devotion, for the good of the children.

28b-31. In this matter, listen to an old account, O you of a

good vow. The fruit of the month of Vaiśākha is very wonderful (when a gift is given) on the full-moon day (of that month). Thirty days beginning with (the Sun's) passing through Aries are excellent. They are said to be superior to all sacrifices and holy. Especially (holy) are the three days (viz. the thirteenth, fourteenth the full-moon day) which are to be secured with a difficulty by sinners. The full-moon day of Vaiśākha is still more holy and is dear to Viṣṇu. This day is the day of the beginning of the period of the duration of the world called Vārāhakalpa.

32-36a. Formerly on this day Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) killed these two pre-eminent demons—Hiraṇyākṣa and Madhu, and lifted up the earth. This lord performed these three (feats) only on the thirteenth, fourteenth and the full-moon day, in the bright half of the month of Vaiśākha. Since then, O best brāhmaṇa, due to the speciality, this full-moon day, the beginning of the period of the duration of the world, is called purifying and the proper witness of the feat. O brāhmaṇa, what is the use of the life of him, indeed harming himself, who, controlling himself, has not bathed in the morning in Vaiśākha?

36b-38a. A woman or a man who restraining herself or himself, has, according to proper rites, bathed in the morning on the thirteenth and fourteenth, and especially on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, is freed from all sins. He who has passed the full-moon day of Vaiśākha without bath, gifts, worship, śrāddha, or (other acts of) merit, has indeed hell as his abode.

38b-44a. There is no other sacred treatise like the Veda; there is no other holy place like Gaṅgā; there is no other gift like a cow or water; and there is no other day like the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. He who being solely devoted to Viṣṇu, gives a cow with water (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, is especially the fourth of (i.e. in addition to) the three gods. A man who has killed his mother or father, or who causes abortion, or who violates his teacher's bed (i.e. his wife), gets free from all sins on seeing a cow along with water. Those who, in this earth, give a cow along with water according to the proper rite (to a brāhmaṇa) on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, liberate ten earlier and ten later members of the family. Those who give to the best brāhmaṇas sugar, fruits, tāmbūla, shoes and documents, are declared to be fortunate in this world. He who gives jars with gems and water, cooked food, and golden presents on the full-

moon day of Vaiśākha, would obtain the fruit of a horse-sacrifice.

44b-49a. Here also they relate an old account, and the conversation of a brāhmaṇa with ghosts in a great forest. O sinless one, formerly there lived a brāhmaṇa Dhanaśarman by name. When he had gone to the forest for (collecting) kuśa, he saw a wonder. He who was frightened, saw three wicked and very awful ghosts whose hair was raised, whose eyes were red, whose teeth were black, who were emaciated, who were making various sounds, and were running here and there. Seeing them, the brāhmaṇa, afflicted with fear, speedily ran away. They too, crying, went after him at that time. Being overpowered by the ghosts, he spoke sweet words (to them).

Dhanaśarman said:

49b-53. Who are you? Due to what have you been reduced to this condition suitable for hell? Please protect me, afflicted with fear, fit to be pitied, afflicted, a devotee of Viṣṇu, very much frightened, a poor brāhmaṇa who has come to the forest. That Viṣṇu, the lord, Brahmaṇya, Keśava pleased with you through compassion towards me, will give you felicity. That Viṣṇu is like the hemp-flower, has put on a yellow garment, and by merely hearing his name great darkness goes (away). The god is without origin and death, holds a conch, a disc and a mace. He is endless; his eyes are like lotuses; he gives salvation to the dead.

Yama said:

54-55. The goblins were pleased by merely hearing the name of Viṣṇu. They lived in religious merit. They were controlled by compassion and generosity. They were pleased by his words and were impelled by his direction. The goblins, afflicted with the flood of hunger and thirst, said these (words) to the brāhmaṇa:

The goblins said:

56-64. O brāhmaṇa, on seeing you and on hearing the name of Viṣṇu, we have reached another condition. We have become kind. Indeed the union with the good removes sin, and joins (a man) with virtue, and quickly spreads fame. Whom does the

moonlight of the nectar of a devotee of Viṣṇu, which is full of the elixir of life, and which gives great delight, not give joy? This is named Kṛtaghna. This second one is Vidaivata. This third one is Avaiśākha, who is the (most) sinful of the three. This sinful one always practised ingratitude. Therefore, his name is fixed as Kṛtaghna due to his (ungrateful) actions. This Kṛtaghna was a śūdra named Sudāsa in the former existence. Due to that sin (of ingratitude) he has reached this condition. There is an expiation for a very great sinner, a rogue, or for one who acts malevolently to his teacher or master; but there is no expiation for an ungrateful person. O brāhmaṇa, having experienced (i.e. lived in) groups of many hells with bodies enduring torments, he has come to this stage. Without worshipping the deities, so also without giving to the teacher and brāhmaṇas, he ate food all alone. Therefore, he is (called) Vidaivata.

65-76a. This one known by the name Harivīra in the former existence, was the king of ten thousand villages. Through anger, egotism and atheism, he was always bent upon violating his teacher's orders. He who censured brāhmaṇas, ate without offering the (five) great sacrifices. Due to that sinful act, he, having experienced the great peril of hell, was then born as a ghost called Vidaivata. I am the third one, Avaiśākha by name. I am (most) sinful of the Gautama family, known by the same name. I lived in Viprovāsapura, and was a sacrificer in the former existence. I who follow the path as laid down in the Vedic texts, did not bathe in honour of Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha. I did not give (any gift), or did not offer any oblation, especially on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. During that month I did not worship (Viṣṇu) the killer of (the demon) Madhu. Nor did I please the learned men. I also did not gratify dead ancestors and deities with the gifts of jars containing water; and I did not offer sesamum seeds with water to learned brāhmaṇas. In that month I did not honour, in order to gratify the dead ancestors and deities with flowers, fruits, tāmbūla, sandal, fans and garments. Not a single full-moon day of Vaiśākha, giving complete fruit, did I (even) observe by good deeds like a bath, giving gifts or worshipping (Viṣṇu). Therefore, all my deeds done according to the Vedic texts have become fruitless. Then I totally became

a ghost named Avaiśākha. I have fully told you this cause of (the turning into ghosts of) all the three of us.

76b-80. (Please) be our emancipator from (our) sin, since you are a restrained brāhmaṇa. O brāhmaṇa, brāhmaṇas, auspicious due to having done good deeds, are superior to holy places. They liberate great sinners even though they have resorted to (i.e. fallen into) hells. Between the two, viz. the man who always bathes at the holy places like Gaṅgā and the man who keeps the company of the good—he who has the company of the good, is better. Or, you who are exerting for us, (please) go to my son, well-known as Dhanaśarman, and inform him, O lord. He, who exerts when some work of others has come up, obtains much more fruit than obtained by sacrifices or giving gifts.

Yama said:

81-82a. Having heard those words of the ghost, Dhanaśarman was extremely pained. Having recognised him to be his father, fallen into hell, he entirely censured himself, and said these words.

Dhanaśarman said:

82b-87. O lord, I am the useless son of you—of Gautama. That son who would not carefully liberate his father, would not purify himself, or being rich, would not give (gifts, is useless). Even an intelligent person has to note carefully that religious merit s difficult (to understand), as you who are my father, have reached this misfortune. You have not secured continuous happiness from me. He, due to whom continuous happiness is obtained in both worlds is called a son due to that. According to law, a man has two teachers in this world—his father and his mother. Of the two also, the father is superior as his superiority due to his (depositing the) seed is seen. What should I do? Where should I go? O father, how (i.e. what would be) your condition? I do not know the true nature of propriety. I depend upon your words.

The ghost said:

88-96. O son, listen to my true words. Due to the force of future interest, I shall have bliss as a result of some religious

merit. I who was performing the rites as laid down in the scriptures arrogantly, dishonoured the words of my teacher; (and thus) I insulted my teacher. Due to the teacher's insult, and the man's great delight, anger or pride, the religious merit perishes, like glory due to bad conduct. A rite which is not against the Vedic rites (should be performed) according to the rules laid down in the Purāṇas. (But) through ignorance I performed only the Vedic rites. O son, I never duly observed even a single full-moon day of Vaiśākha, which is a flame like that of the wild fire for the fuel of sins, and an axe for the tree of sins. That man who does not observe the vow of the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, would be Avaiśākha. After that for ten existences he is born in the stocks of animals. Then in course of time he would become a ghost in the end. He somehow gets the human existence which is hard to get. I shall tell you a great means which brings about the liberation of a ghost; I had heard this in my former existence from the mouth of my own teacher. O son, go home and bathe duly in Yamunā. That full-moon day of Vaiśākha, the beginning of kalpa, and the giver of all good conditions, has come today. The full-moon day is beneficial for the worship of the dead ancestors and the deities in the later part of the day. A man should devoutly give on this day even water mixed with sesamum seeds, with water jars and food, to the dead ancestors.

97-103. That śrāddha offered here (i.e. on this day) lasts for a thousand years. He who feeds brāhmaṇas on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, has his dead ancestors satisfied with each ball of rice for a life time. Having duly bathed on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, one should feed ten brāhmaṇas with milk. There is no doubt that by (doing) that he gets freed from all sins. Having given white or black sesamum seeds along with water, he should invoke their blessings. Saying, 'May Dharmarāja be pleased', he should gratify his dead ancestors and deities. Just at that moment only the sin that he has committed throughout his life, perishes. The sesamum seeds created by Brahmā should be offered (to a brāhmaṇa) with devotion on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha and should be applied to the entire body, O brāhmaṇa. To him who bathes with sesamum seeds mixed with barley grains (applied) to the entire body, O brāhmaṇa, Brahmā gives a desired boon, so also does Dharma.

104-114. He who gives, to please Dharmarāja, water-jars, there is no doubt that he has liberated seven (members before) him and seven (after him of his family). O son, give us that fruit which is produced by devoutly bathing, muttering (prayers), offering oblations, giving gifts and worshipping (Viṣṇu) on the thirteenth, the fourteenth and on the full-moon day (of Vaiśākha). Abandoning these two ghosts I shall resort to a position in the heaven; for, the end of the sin of these two has also come by.

Yama said:

Saying 'All right' he left. Then the brāhmaṇa took a bath and gave gifts very much devoutly on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha. Having devoutly bathed and being very much pleased, he, when the full-moon day of Vaiśākha arrived, gave many gifts and gave them separately for his religious merit. Just at that moment only, they, seated in an aeroplane, went to heaven. O best brāhmaṇa, they were pleased with his having given his religious merit to them. The best brāhmaṇa Dhanaśarman also, who knew the sacred texts, the law-codes and the Purāṇas enjoyed many pleasures for a long time and obtained Brahmā's heaven. Therefore, with great regard (for you), I describe in brief this most meritorious full-moon day of Vaiśākha, which purifies all. Those men who, of a pure heart, bathe duly in the morning in the month of Vaiśākha, and worship (Viṣṇu) the destroyer of Madhu, are alone fortunate, blessed and they alone are born in the world as men having a purpose. The man who, having bathed in the morning, worships (Viṣṇu) the lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī), and is endowed with (i.e. observes) all controls and restraints, indeed destroys his sin.

115-128. Those who, being controlled, bathe in the month of Vaiśākha have alone overcome death; are alone fortunate among men; they alone are free from sins; they alone do not enter (a mother's) womb (i.e. are not reborn). That month of Vaiśākha, even a small meritorious act alone in which would be equal to (merit done in) a day of Brahmā, roars with sacrifices and austerities and giving of gifts. Even the quality of viciousness of a man who bathes and worships Viṣṇu at sunrise in the month

of Vaiśākha, tends to make his body pure due to his contact with a drop of water. Till that Virāṭ, Viṣṇu, the dear lord of Ramā (i.e. Lakṣmī) does not arrive, sins, having got upon a man's body move there. The steps which a man puts for going to a holy place in the month of Vaiśākha, again become equal to horse-sacrifices, due to recollection of Śrī Mādhava (i.e. Viṣṇu) and by reciting his name. The month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, burns, when a (daily) bath is taken during it, many grave sins like (the mountains) Meru and Mandara. O brāhmaṇa, to favour you, I have, in brief, told you this greatness of the month of Vaiśākha, which destroys the sins of the listener. He too, who will devoutly listen to this account narrated by me, will be free from sins and will not see me. The many sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa committed (by a man), definitely perish by performing the rites (narrated above) in Vaiśākha. A man who has duly bathed during Vaiśākha would liberate thirty former, thirty later dead ancestors, so also thirty far and near ancestors. On one side are all holy places and sacrifices with presents, and on the other side is the month of Vaiśākha (in) which (the vows are) properly observed. Since this month of Vaiśākha is very dear to that lord Viṣṇu of excellent deeds, it is superior to all (sacrifice etc.). O lord of the earth, having got what I told about the month of Vaiśākha, do not entertain any doubt whatsoever. In this matter listen to a wonderful, old account. Though the account should not be told (to anyone), I shall tell it to you.

CHAPTER NINETYNINE

Kaśyapa's Advice to King Mahīratha

Yama said:

1-7. Formerly there was a well-known king named Mahīratha who had obtained great power and wealth due to his former religious merit. He merely confined himself to amorous play with his wife who subjected him to lust. He was addicted

to that vice only, and was not settled in piety. Having transferred (the administration of) his kingdom to his minister, the king enjoyed the objects of senses. He, moving in the company of beautiful women, and averse to royal offices, did not consider (i.e. care for) his subjects, wealth, religious rites, material welfare and (other) acts. He only had desire for the amorous play with beautiful women. After a long time his family priest, Kaśyapa, thinking in his mind that a preceptor who, through folly, does not ward off the king should be known as a sharer in the sin, spoke righteous words to him. (He also thought:) 'If he disregards the words of the family priest though admonished by him, then the family priest is not at fault. The king shares the entire fault':

8-13. "O listen, O king, listen to the words of me—your teacher—which are accompanied with piety and substance, which are unbroken (i.e. clear) in meaning, which are significant and are free from (selfish) desire and passion. This alone is a great religious merit to live in (i.e. abide by) the words of the preceptor. A small order of the teacher (if followed) increases the life, wealth and happiness of kings. You have not gratified brāhmaṇas with gifts; you have not worshipped Viṣṇu. You have not observed any vow; you have not practised any penance; you have not visited a holy place. You who were under the influence of lust, did not think of Viṣṇu's name. Oh! due to the company of cowards you did not keep contact of the learned. To whom are beloveds, carrying the chowries of Cupid, not dear? But they are fickle like the leaves of kadalī due to violently moving wind. Men of large hearts are not satisfied with things unsteady like ripples, pleasures transitory like the knittings of eyebrows, and youth that is drunk (i.e. enjoyed) for a short time.

14-17a. What is the use of knowledge, penance, sacrifice, political wisdom, or what is the use of a discriminating mind to him whose heart is taken away by women? Religious merit alone is the friend that follows (a man) after (his) death. All else perishes along with the body. (A man) should collect religious merit gradually, as the ants put up an anthill. With religious merit as his companion, he crosses darkness difficult to cross.

17b-19a. O best of kings, do you not know the flurry of men's life which is unsteady like the violent billows on water sent up by wind? What is the use of senseless ornaments to them who have politeness as their jewelled crown, truth and piety as the ear-rings and sacrifice as the bracelet? The kinsmen leave the dead body on the ground like (a piece of) wood or a clod and turn away.

19b-26. Religious merit (alone) goes after him (i.e. the dead man). Why do you not get up and run, when all (your relatives) are going away, your (span of) life is decreasing and your existence is being cut off? The family, the sons, the wife etc., the body, collection of wealth belong to others and are uncertain. Good or bad deeds alone are yours. When, leaving everything, you who are helpless, should go, why is it that you are attached to worthless objects? Why do you not do your duty? How will you, the dead one (i.e. after death), go all alone along the path in the forest where there is no rest, no support, no provisions for the journey and without a spiritual teacher? Nobody will go after you who have started (along the path after death). (Only) your good and bad deeds will follow you who will be going. Being careful, resort to the deed which is told by the sacred texts and the codes of law, which is proper for your family and place, which is beneficial; and resort to good conduct based on piety. One should give up worldly prosperity and love of sensual enjoyment if they are bereft of virtue. All pleasures like worldly prosperity and sensual enjoyment are had by means of virtue.

27-29. Day and night one should practise the control of senses and deep abstract meditation, for one whose senses are controlled is able to keep his subjects on the (right) track. Wealth which is very fickle like glances of a very bold woman lives with kings for a long time through discipline due to great effort. (But) the wealth of those who are given to lust and pride, who do things thoughtlessly, and who are fools, perish along with their life.

30-36. Large-hearted persons do not dance (with joy) due to prosperity which is (first) seen and which (later) disappears. An ocean does not increase in size due to rivers that come or go. Between an evil habit and death, evil habit is said to be trouble-

some, for the addicts to a bad habit go down and down, while a king who is not addicted to a bad habit, goes to heaven. Vices, especially due to lust are difficult to end. Give up this lust which is hostile to piety. There are also the kingdoms of the foolish, thoughtless demons of bad conduct, which are enjoyed due to their luck. Those accompanied by sins, are not stable in this world. They vanish as fuel does due to the contact of fire. He whose heart, while he walks, stands, is awake or sleeps, is not given to thought is certainly dead. Since a teacher is said to be the adviser of the learned those near whom stand calamities, should hold on their head (i.e. should honour) words of advice.

37-41. A wise man accomplishes his objects after giving up the fever of the (addiction to) objects of senses by means of his mind which is in equilibrium, which is steady, and through a practical scheme. The mind of beings like a child, (though) taken (away) from foul things goes to good things and (again) from them to the other (i.e. foul things); therefore one should drive it (away) with force. A king, accepting the opinion of the old who see (i.e. know) the righteous conduct, should control one's mind going astray. Riches do not help, nor friends, nor kinsmen; the movement of hands and feet (does not help); going to another country (does not help); freedom from bodily suffering (does not help); so also resorting to holy places. One can get the highest position by muttering (prayers) with mind devoted to Him.

42-46. Therefore, a wise man should certainly strive to control the mind remaining in the objects of senses, as the driver (of a chariot) controls the horses. O king, you, being restrained, should do that of which you are deprived, and (which was done) by devotees getting the respective fruits. Therefore, also listen now. A man who is erring should ask (i.e. consult) his wise friends. It is proper to do what they would say when asked. He who desires bliss, should, by all means, curb his lust and anger, since they are bent upon harming his bliss. O king, lust is a great, powerful enemy residing in the body. A man who longs for bliss should not go under its sway.

47-50a. This Cupid (i.e. lust) was formerly burnt with the fire from his forehead by the trident-holder, god of gods (i.e. Śiva), and was rendered bodiless. Such was the situation. When this mind-born one desires to strike a woman, he resorts to the

body of men, and manifests his nature. He maddens a man by invisibly resorting to his body when he again and again thinks of the form of a woman. In the same way he also maddens the body of a woman. There is no doubt about it.

50b-69a. Therefore, O king, his name has come to be *Smara*, due to his being remembered (i.e. thought of). O hero, he has any colour. He would resort to (i.e. put on) any garment. Due to the light of his lustre he would go to a condition free from the stream of tears being drunk. Having taken up the form of a woman he would delude even a courageous man, and having resorted to (the body of) a man he would cause a woman to melt. O king, he is but natural; (though) bodiless is present in a body. How is (then) sin done in the case of the body? Who is more impure than him by reaching whom the pure products of a cow and the oblations become impure (just) in a moment. The (people in) this world, smelling their own foul odour, seeing their own feces, troubling their own noses, do not get disgusted. Who is more impure than him reaching whom agreeable food, fragrant food and drinks become impure? Food, reaching his belly would give up its nature; its impurity mixed with insects is quickly realised. Yet, O king, in the body he gives up his own nature, and goes to a dog's condition in the body full of the foul smell of insects. There is no doubt that lice or insects are produced there. That insect causes bursting; and there is an awful itching. It would create agony; and would shake the entire body. That scratching rubbed by the tips of the nails is allayed. Like that is the pleasure of a sexual union. There is no doubt. Thus a man enjoys pleasures. He also drinks (i.e. eats) good eatables. The fire (in the body) digests (the food) that is there, and would drop the feces at the anus. The fluid there that has become strong, becomes excessive. Being pure, and of a pure vigour he goes to the place of Brahmā. The vigour does not obtain a seat, and remains unsteady. He is dragged by samāna (i.e. vital air having its seat in the cavity of the navel and essential for digestion); and is carried by that air. In the skull of beings there are five insects. These two are at the root of the ear. Then there are in the seat of the eyes; O king, they are of the size of the small finger. They are red-tailed. The black-tailed have the colour of fresh butter. There is no doubt about this.

Well-being to you, hear their names from me who am telling them. The two insects *Piṅgalī* and *Śṛṅgalī* are at the root of the ear. The other two, *Śṛṅgalī* and *Jaṅgalī*, remain in the interior of the eyes. There is no doubt that there are a hundred and fifty insects like that. All remain in the forehead and are of the size of a mustard. There is no doubt that all suffering from skull-disease get disturbed.

69b-77. I shall (now) tell about another great insect *Prājāpatya*. It has the size of a rice-grain and its colour. There is no doubt about it. O king, listen, there is a couple of hair in his mouth. The intelligence of beings is perishable at that moment only. There is no doubt about it. That vigour falls in the form of a fluid into the mouth of that Prājāpatya remaining in its own seat. There is no doubt about this. It happily drinks that vigour (i.e. that fluid) and becomes intoxicated due to that. Breaking the place of palate only, it remains unsteadily. The arteries (called) *Iḍā*, *Piṅgalā* and *Suṣumnā* are stationed there. By its own power the artery is shaken for a moment. (Then) O king, there is the itching for sex in all beings. The penis of the man expands, so also the vulva of the woman. The woman and the man, getting mad, are then united. Due to rubbing of one body with another, there is a momentary pleasure. Then there is the same kind of itching. O hero, such a feeling is indeed seen everywhere. This consequence of the (enjoyment of the) objects of senses is unpleasant.

78-82a. Virtue alone, practised duly is better. Resorting to firmness then, practise virtue alone. This is the unsteady breath which, in a moment, has hundreds of goings and comings. The life of men is dependent on it. Who causes delay in (the practice of) virtue? Oh! the heart of a man who has reached even a hundred (years) would not keep away from the prohibited senses of objects. Sexual desire can never be pacified by enjoying senses of objects. Like fire with oblation it again enhances.

82b-93. Who else, but the soul-lord Rāma—the lord Viṣṇu, is able to free the mind taken away by an unchaste woman? Therefore, due to the foulness of lust everything becomes fruitless. You have age (i.e. you are young) even now. Practise what is beneficial to you. On one side are all virtuous deeds causing the destruction of the sins of sinners, and on the other side,

there is always the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu. Murder of a brāhmaṇa, drinking liquor, stealing, cohabiting with one's teacher's wife are declared to be great sins by best sages. The month of Vaiśākha would destroy all the great darkness of sins committed by men through mind and body by means of a vow; as the sun would totally destroy darkness, in the same way the month of Mādhava would remove (sins). Duly practise (the vows) in that month. O king, having abandoned, due to the powerful religious acts performed in the month of Vaiśākha, the great, awful sins committed from birth, men, being delighted reach the city of Viṣṇu. Even sinners, if they practise (vows during) even one Vaiśākha with devotion, go to Viṣṇu's abode. Therefore, O king, you too, bathing (every) morning, duly worship (Viṣṇu), the enemy of (the demon) Madhu, during this month of Vaiśākha. As the cover of a rice-grain or the blackness of copper go away due to the act (of pounding or rubbing), in the same way, O hero, the sin of a man goes away (by means of a rite). Like (the cover of) a rice-grain, the natural impurity of a man is abundant. There is no doubt that it perishes. Therefore, do a bright deed."

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED

Carnal Enjoyment Is Sinful

The king said:

1-4. I have been advised by you with words that are like the water of the milky sea, that have a viewpoint that is cool and pure, that are true and beautiful. O dear one, you have made me drink the nectar which has not come up from the ocean, which is not a substance, which is a medicine for the calamity, and which removes the disease in the form of the worldly existence. O brāhmaṇa, it is said that contact of the good gives delight to men, removes their sins, is a medicine for their life, and destroys old age and death. Due to the association of the good only, those desired objects difficult to obtain, are obtained.

5-11a. For him, who has bathed with (i.e. in the water of) Gaṅgā in the form of the company of the good, which removes sins, what is the use of (giving) gifts, (visiting) holy places, (practising) austerities and sacrifices? The good who know the ways of the world, who are tranquil, are the final emancipation for men who sink and come up in the ocean of the worldly existence, are a strong boat for those who sink in the water (of the mundane existence). O lord, that my feeling desiring the happiness through lust only which was formerly there, has been reversed due to your sight and your words. One would lose a thousand existences for the happiness in one existence. A wise man collects the (fruit of) thousands of existences by means of (i.e. in) one existence. Oh! O brāhmaṇa, by me, a fool, whose heart was longing for carnal pleasures, my own good has not at all been done. Oh! (great was) the delusion of my mind due to which I threw my soul into an awful calamity, ending in misery and difficult to overcome. O holy one, I am pleased (as) I have been roused by your words.

11b-14. Please liberate me by giving me advice. Since you advised me due to my former meritorious deeds, I am (now) especially purified with the dust of your feet. O best among speakers, describe to me the rite of the month of Vaiśākha, which you have said to be removing all sins. O brāhmaṇa sage, for my emancipation from the sins (please) tell me: What are the gifts in that month? What (kind of) bath is prescribed? Who is the deity? Which are the rules?

Yama said:

15. O brāhmaṇa, that glorious Kaśyapa, the treasure of compassion, who was thus addressed, said words which were meritorious, auspicious and beneficial to all.

Kaśyapa said :

16-19. A wise man has to explain to you what is asked with a mind capable of putting together the earlier and later (ideas), and not to mean person of a wicked mind. There is no doubt that by giving in that way a good (i.e. proper) opinion to him who is engaged in sinful activities, the proper

fruit of giving knowledge is obtained. One should not speak to anyone when not asked; so also to him who is asking unjustly. A wise man, even though he knows (the truth), should behave towards the people like a dumb man. (But) he should speak to his learned disciples and sons, though he is not asked. The good of those who have faith is (always) superior.

20-28a. O king, due to my words and due to certain religious merit you had acquired before, now you have become one of a pure heart. Your body having a sinful condition has now gone due to (your) having resorted to me. Due to your having heard the knowledge of religious merit, it has (now) become one having a meritorious condition. A body is of a sinful condition; it is known as unrighteous and is without knowledge. The other which is of (i.e. practises) good vows should be known as righteous. The third one intended for enjoyment of religious merit, and suffering (fruit of) impiety is beyond the senses. Thus those who know religious merit say that the body is of three kinds. As there is the enjoyment of the good deeds and there is salvation, it is of three kinds. The body of a sinful condition is called sinful. Now, the body of you who are having devotion to your teacher, who are following my words (of advice), and who are hearing the nature of religious merit, has become of the nature of religious merit. By that only spotless purity, proper for religious rites, has been produced. Due to luck the minds and acts of bodies of men undergo a change from time to time. Now indeed your body moves on to piety. Therefore, I am inviting you to the excellent bath in the month of Vaiśākha.

Yama said:

28b-32. Then that family priest Kaśyapa urged the king to bathe, (give) gifts, worship (Viṣṇu), and perform proper rites, as formerly told in the sacred texts, in the month of Vaiśākha. The sage spoke to the king as told (in the holy texts). He made him hear the essence of (Viṣṇu's) hymn, and taught him Viṣṇu's worship, having heard and studied which he would obtain the proper fruit. He made him (a man of) pure devotion. The king also performed (the rites) according to the rules. The performance (of rites) in the month of Vaiśākha is praiseworthy. He listened to it with respect.

33-39. The best king devoutly performed morning bath, (got) water for washing the feet with, (offered) oblations and worshipped Viṣṇu. He also made an offering of eatables (to Viṣṇu). That best brāhmaṇa who gives gifts according to the rules and with respect, and who performs the rite like this, who devoutly, every day and every year does like this, goes to the abode of Viṣṇu. Then in other months he again becomes one sporting with the breasts of beautiful women, and has the only desire of enjoyment, according to his liking. He being under the influence of lust, does not follow the rule of piety nor does he consider the royal affairs, except in the month of Vaiśākha. O best brāhmaṇa, even for the great, this mind-born (one), born with the body, is difficult to resist. The course of desires is beginningless, since the women who are endowed with (beautiful) hair and collyrium, whose touch is bad, who are dear to the eyes, who have flames like those of fire, burn a man like grass (i.e. hay). Carnal desire is an awful enemy duly living in the bodies of men. It is full of the smoke of delusion, is sinful. Whom has he (i.e. it) not blinded?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ONE

King Mahīratha Goes to Viṣṇu's Abode

Yama said:

1-7. Then the king, observed by the glance of Death, and with his body emaciated due to consumption caused by extreme sexual enjoyment, died. He was being taken by the attendants of Yama, was repeatedly being beaten, was wailing with loud cries, and remembered his sins. Then Viṣṇu's messengers, having come, beat my followers, and saying, 'He is righteous', they put him into an aeroplane. The king, with his sins exhausted due to the morning bath in the month of Vaiśākha, and being praised by the hosts of celestial nymphs, was taken to Viṣṇu's city. Then, thinking that he was unrighteous, the king was again put by the divine messengers at the behest of Viṣṇu, not far from the

path to hell. While going, he heard the various wailings of beings, being roasted in hell. Hearing the very awful cries of the sinners being boiled, the king was amazed and became extremely afflicted.

8. He said: "O messengers, what is this awful wailing that is heard and is not heard again. Please tell me the reason of it."

The messengers said:

9-17. Beings who have abandoned bounds of morality, who are sinful, and who are bereft of (good) behaviour are thrown into awful hells like Tāmisra. Those who have committed sins here (i.e. in this world), after death resort to the path of (the abode of) Yama, suffer very terrible grief. Being dragged by fierce men of Yama, and fallen into darkness, they are eaten up by very awful dogs, foxes, carnivorous animals, crows, herons, cranes etc. and by wolves and tigers having fire-like mouths and by serpents, scorpions etc. Being burnt by fire, being pricked by thorns, being cut off by saws, being troubled by thirst, and being oppressed by hunger, so also by awful hosts of diseases, fainting at every step due to the odour of pus and blood, they are at times boiled in oils, at times beaten with pestles, are roasted in iron-vessels or at times on stones. At times they eat what is vomitted; at times (they eat) pus and blood. At times they eat feces; at times awful flesh at places with a foul smell. At times they are eaten by insects with fire-like mouths.

18-24. They, wailing in various tones, are again and again roasted in houses where, in the heaps of hair, blood, flesh, marrow and bones, the dead bodies are scattered in a disorderly manner and are clearly eaten by insects, which (houses) are destroyed by the mouths of crows, herons and great vultures and have crores of bodies put very closely without interstices, which have saws and small flat stones for grinding and have no oil, which are made of trees with sharp thorns, and have the pillars of iron, oil and marrow, which are bright with pillars with fierce flames and razors, thorns and nails, which are full with the hot pus of Vaitaraṇī, and the breasts of men and women cut off with swords, and which are awful on account of being seized with fearful darkness. They have nooses tied round their necks; at

places they are surrounded by serpents; at places they are squeezed by machines, and at places they are dragged with their knees (seized).

25-29. O king, the sinners, doing bad acts, and wailing, with their backs, heads and necks broken, with their throats choked, (appearing) very awful, they with bodies capable of suffering torment, being whirled in an apartment on the top of the house, are troubled. They wail along with the enjoyment of sensual objects. All beings suffer this (due to) what they have done before. The union (that was had) for love with another's wife, gives pain. The enjoyment of objects of senses for a short while, has turned out to be giving pain for many years. O best king, having got the touch of the breezes coming from the body of you who bathed duly in the morning in Vaiśākha, they are delighted for a moment and due to your lustre have become strong. Therefore, they who remain in the hell are free from wailing. Even the name of those who have a meritorious character is said to lead to happiness. The touch of the breezes that had the touch of their bodies causes delight.

Yama said:

30-32a. Hearing these words, the king, the treasure of compassion, said to the messengers of Viṣṇu of wonderful acts: "The heart of the good is indeed soft like fresh butter, which heated with fire, certainly melts."

The king said:

32b-39a. Abandoning an oppressed and unhappy being, I am not able to go. Fie upon him who, though capable, does not remove the affliction of the oppressed. If these beings became happy due to the touch of the breezes that left after touching my body, then you may take me there. As the sandal-trees that remove the torment of others purify sandal, in the same way those men who remove the affliction of others purify their mother, are blessed. Those alone are the good, who, in this world remove the affliction of others, and for whom their life is (as insignificant) as a blade of grass in the matter of removing the affliction of the afflicted. This earth is sustained by those

men who are bent on (doing) good to others. The constant happiness of mind is heaven; it may resemble hell (outwardly). Therefore, the good are always happy with (i.e. due to) the happiness of others. It is better to fall into hell, it is better to die, than having pleasure for a moment except the one that is had by removing the affliction of the afflicted.

The messengers said:

39b-45a. Sinful beings are roasted here in the awful hell. They live by (the fruits of) their own deeds. There is no place for misunderstanding. Those who have, in the other world (i.e. on the earth), not given (gifts), not offered oblations, or (have) not bathed at a holy place, (have) also not obliged (any one), or (have) not done, with devotion, a great meritorious act, (have) not offered sacrifices, (have) not practised penance, (have) not muttered (prayers) with joy, are roasted in awful hells. Those who are of a bad character, whose practices are bad, who are condemned due to their diversions and food, who harm others, who commit sins, who amuse themselves in a bad manner, who cut asunder the hearts of others with words cutting the vitals, so also those who sport with the wives of others, are roasted in a hell. Come on, O king, we shall go to Viṣṇu's abode. It is not proper for a meritorious person like you to stay here hereafter.

The king said:

45b-57. O messengers, if I have done meritorious deeds, then why am I brought along this path leading to hell? Or what is my great religious merit? I, given to carnal pleasures, have not done any meritorious act like that. (Then) how shall I go to the city of Viṣṇu? I have a doubt.

The messengers said:

It is true, you, with your mind influenced by lust, did not do a meritorious act, did not perform sacrifices, did not eat the leftovers of a sacrifice; but, formerly, you, impelled by the words of your teacher, bathed duly in the morning (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha for three years and devoutly worshipped Viṣṇu, the lord of the universe and the killer of (the demon) Madhu. He to whom his devotees are dear, destroys the stream

of major and heinous sins. O lord of men, by means of that, the essence of all religious practices, he being honoured by the hosts of gods, is taken to an auspicious place. Viṣṇu, when worshipped, destroys even major sins. In the same way the month of Vaiśākha is declared (to be destroying sins) by Brahmā. As by a spark of fire a heap of grass (hay) is burnt, in the same way by the (daily) morning bath in Vaiśākha the stream of sins is burnt. As long as a man does not bathe in the morning (every day) in the month of Vaiśākha, even the major sins originate in his body. A man who is engaged in vows as laid down (in sacred texts), is freed from streams of sins due to devotion to Viṣṇu and would go to Viṣṇu's abode. O lord of men, since, formerly you did not do meritorious acts from your birth, you were taken along the path to hell. Now, O lord of the earth, being praised by us and the hosts of gods quickly go by an aeroplane to Viṣṇu's abode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWO

King Mahīratha Gives Part of His Merit to the Sufferers in Hell

Yama said:

1-4. O brāhmaṇa, then the king, the ocean of compassion, afflicted by their grief, spoke politely to Viṣṇu's messengers: "The good ones look upon the protection of the frightened one as the fruit of affluence, nobility of birth and meritorious deeds. If I have some religious merit (to my credit) then, by means of that let these beings, free from their sins, go to heaven. I shall live in their place." Having heard these words of the truthful king, they, thinking of his truthfulness and generosity, said these words to the king:

The messengers said:

5-11. O king, due to this your kind deed and your words, your religious merit, especially the accumulated one, has in-

creased. They know that a bath, gift, muttering, sacrifice, penance, worship of deities etc. which is done in the month of Vaiśākha, gives an inexhaustible fruit. A sacrificer or a donor plays in heaven with the gods in ponds having golden lotuses and at the root of the desire-yielding tree. Being sung by the bevy of divine young beautiful damsels he is delighted. By giving water and food a man obtains the auspicious heaven of Varuṇa. One who gives a cow easily liberates seven (members) of his family. By giving a horse a man goes to the Sun's heaven. A man who imparts knowledge goes to Brahmā's heaven. Similarly by giving gold a man goes to the abode of gods. In the same way, one who gives his daughter (in marriage) goes to Viṣṇu's world. A man who bathes in the month of Vaiśākha, gives gifts after worshipping Viṣṇu, obtains all his desired objects and reaches an immutable place.

12-14. On one side are penance, gifts and rites like sacrifices and extraction of Soma juice, and on the other is the great month of Vaiśākha observed properly. O king, the good deed which you formerly did even on one day of the month of Vaiśākha is more than all gifts. O king, O treasure of compassion, give, through pity, your religious merit of a day to the afflicted ones being roasted in the hell.

15-20. There is no virtue like compassion. There is no penance like compassion. There is no gift like compassion. There is no friend like compassion. A man who gives his religious merit (to others) always gets religious merit a lakh times (more); especially due to pity your religious merit would increase. A man who removes the affliction of afflicted beings, is alone blessed in the world; he should be known as born from a portion of Viṣṇu. Give duly, repeating thrice, the religious merit of your bath, gifts etc.—destroying all sins—which you did on the full-moon day of Vaiśākha, to these, by keeping lord Viṣṇu as the witness; by that they would obtain heaven. Śibi, the ocean of fame, gave formerly, through kindness, his flesh for (saving the life of) a pigeon, and the ocean of compassion shines in the heaven.

21. The royal sage Dadhīci also gave the collection of his bones, and obtained glory, the moonlight to the three worlds, and inexhaustible heaven.

22-32. The royal sage Sahasrajit abandoned his dear life for a brāhmaṇa, and he of a great fame went to the best heavens. We think that a man does not get that happiness even in salvation which he gets by offering complete satisfaction to an afflicted being. O king, O wise one, due to this deed you have, employing your courage, become the foremost among donors in the tales (about donors). Seeing (i.e. knowing) your intention, your religious merit, pity and your very firm gift, we also, speaking meritorious things, have made an effort to speak. O king, if you like, then without delay, give your religious merit, burning their torment and affliction, to these.

Thus addressed, the kind one, making the mace-holder (Viṣṇu) the witness, duly gave, repeating thrice, his religious merit to them. All those beings, free from the torments inflicted by Yama, got into an excellent aeroplane, and being delighted and saluting, praising and looking at him, went to heaven, when he gave them the religious merit that he had earned on a day of the month of Vaiśākha. Having accepted the religious merit given by the king, which was earned (just) on a day of the month of Vaiśākha, all of them, freed from hell, got into an aeroplane and went to heaven. This is the wonder. Strange is the host of beings on the earth, and strange in many ways is the devotion arisen in them. In the same way, the path of action is strange; (and) the heap of its powers is strange. He who is being praised by groups of sages, who has got more religious merit due to that particular act, who is being saluted by the attendants of the lord of the world, went to that highest place that cannot be obtained by meditating saints.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THREE

How to Meditate on Kṛṣṇa in Vaiśākha

Yama said:

1-8. O best brāhmaṇa, I have narrated in brief some importance of the month of Vaiśākha, especially of the full-moon day.

He who recites this account dear to Viṣṇu in the month of Vaiśākha, getting purified quickly goes to Viṣṇu's abode and gets delighted (there) for many kalpas. This (description of the) greatness of the month of Vaiśākha, the life of the king and our dialogue are blessed, give fame, long life, are a great means of securing prosperity, lead to heaven, give prosperity, delight, are praiseworthy and destroy sins. Having heard and recited it duly, and delighting the one dear to the mind, there would be (i.e. take place) devotion, due to which there would be the destruction of sins. O brāhmaṇa go, as you desire, from the world of gods. Your kinsmen, having dropped (i.e. put) your body on the ground, are still weeping. Go, as it were, you have just got up from the sleep, before your body is quickly thrown (i.e. put) into fire by your kinsmen that are weeping. By my favour you have heard this path of religious merit. Do it properly. By doing it, you will be united with gods at the (proper) time.

Sūta said:

9-12. The brāhmaṇa, having heard these words of the god, and having saluted the lord of Dharma (i.e. Yama), and with his mind pleased, again fell down on the ground due to the favour of Yama from there; and being attended by his kinsmen, he got up as if he had been asleep. The brāhmaṇa himself performed this rite on the earth year after year, and made men bath in the month of Vaiśākha. On the occasion of the meritorious bath in the month of Vaiśākha, I have told you this dialogue between Yama and the brāhmaṇa.

13-14. To him, the wise one, who would bathe in the month of Vaiśākha, dear to Viṣṇu, and gives gifts, (performs) sacrifices and good deeds with great devotion, the place of Viṣṇu is not difficult to get. He who with a concentrated mind listens to this greatness, due to the Sun's being in Aries, goes, being freed from all sins, to the highest place of Viṣṇu.

The sages said:

15-18. O Sūta, O very wise Sūta, you, of a very kind heart, have told (us) the greatness of the month of Vaiśākha which

destroys sins. You have (also) told us the restraints which are to be observed, and also the worship, bath (to be done and) gifts (to be given) according to the statements in the sacred texts and the codes of law, so also (you have told us) how Viṣṇu, who destroys sins, is pleased. Now we desire to hear about the meditation that liberates one from the worldly existence, of the magnanimous Kṛṣṇa dear to his hosts of devotees.

Sūta said:

19-20. O sages, all of you (now) listen to (the account) of Kṛṣṇa, the soul of the world, the life of the cows, the cowherds and the cowherdesses, and moving in Vṛndāvana. O brāhmaṇas, once Gautama asked Nārada (about this). I shall tell you about that meditation which he had told him.

Nārada said:

21-25. A man of sharp intellect should always remember the excellent Vṛndāvana which appears forth with the fragrant honey dropping from the host of flowers; which is endowed with beauty, being bent due to the mass of new sprouts of good trees; which is surrounded by creepers charming with blossoming fresh sprouts; which is auspicious. He should think of the desire-yielding tree in it, which (tree) was resounding with the hummings of the wandering bees, which were coming out from their mouths and which were sweet due to their enjoying the honey of the blooming flowers; and also resounding with the birds like pigeons, parrots, sārikās and cuckoos; which was full of (the peacocks) the enemies of serpents, dancing here and there; which was constantly served by breezes carrying the drops from the tossing waves of (Yamunā) the daughter of Kalinda, which (breezes) were dusty due to the mass of pollen from the interiors of full-blown lotuses, which were intent upon tossing about the garments of the women from Vraja with their feeling of sex inflamed; which had shoots and new sprouts, the leaves of which were like emeralds, the buds of which were like the mass of the lustre of pearls, which had many fruits of the colour of lotuses; which was the greatest; which was always served by all the seasons; which gave the desired objects. A cautious, wise man should remember a golden ground which

is bright like the sun risen on the mountain with bright golden peaks; which has lustrous jewelled floor; which is shining with the pollen of flowers: which has six parts under it (i.e. the tree) having a shower of the drops of nectar.

26-51. Thinking of the eight-petalled tawny lotus on the greatest seat for abstract meditation, arranged on that jewelled floor, and bright like the sun, one should think of Mukunda (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) seated comfortably in it; (of Mukunda) (who was) like the mass of clouds of split up collyrium; and who was bright like a fresh blue lotus; whose mass of hair was very glossy, dark, dense and curved; whose crest of the peacocks' tails was bright and charming; who was endowed with the flowers of the divine tree fondled by bees; whose ear ornament was a blooming fresh lotus; who had a bright mark of yellow pigment on the base of the forehead bright with unsteady bees; who had the bright cilli-bow; whose face was charming like the autumnal complete orb of the moon without spot; whose eyes were large like petals of lotuses; whose mirror-like cheeks were brightened with jewelled and bright ear-rings of the shape of crocodiles; whose nose was raised and charming; whose lips were more beautiful than red lead; who had brightened the quarters with his gentle smile resembling the moon, the kunda and the mandāra (flowers); whose charming conch-like neck was bright due to the neck-ornament accomplished with the mass of excellent sprouts and flowers; whose shoulders were adorned with spreading garland of santānaka flowers from which were hanging the intoxicated noisy bees; who was shining with the sun in the form of the Kaustubha gem glittering in the sky in the form of his large bosom shining with a series of garlands; whose raised shoulders were well-marked with the auspicious curl of hair on his bosom; whose hands reaching his knees were large and round; who had a little wavy belly; whose hair (on his belly) resembled a swarm of female bees; who had put on armlets, a line of bracelets, a neck-ornament, a girdle, and anklets fashioned with various jewels; whose slim body was tinged with yellow divine fragrant unguents; who had put on a yellowish garment round his round hips; whose thighs and knees were lovely; whose shanks were round and beautiful; who had censured the lustre of the tortoise by means of the lovely and raised foreparts of his feet; whose

lotus-like feet were beautiful, shining like mirrors of emeralds, bright with excellent nails and having the sheaths of red toes; who was charming as his reddish palms and soles were marked with (signs like those of) fish, goads, cupid's flags, barley-corns, lotuses and diamond-pins; whose body was fashioned with the mass of the essence of beauty; who had censured the beauty of Cupid's body with his loveliness; who made the continuous line of the subdued beings salute him due to the constantly produced divine musical orders discharged by the fingers of his hands moving to and fro over the holes of the flute filled with (the breath from) his lotus-like mouth; who was surrounded by cows whose eyes merged in his lotus-like face, that were stumbling, dull and walking slowly due to the burden of their udders, that had in their mouths sprouts of grass left after they were bitten with the tips of their teeth, and whose creeper-like tails were hanging; who was surrounded by calves maddened with the foamy milk dropping from their steady mouths full of their mothers' udders—the ornaments—from which milk was oozing, and with their pairs of ears raised due to the charming, gentle song, sent out by the flute; who was also surrounded by male and female calves with unsteady plantings of the foreparts of their hoofs-unsteady due to the feeling of confusion as a result of gentle strokes of the new horns on their heads; who was surrounded by large oxen who had disturbed the quarters with their bellowing, weary due to the burden of their humps, and having drunk the nectar of the sound of the flute by the steady cavities of their ears, and with their spreading and large noses raised; who was also surrounded by cowherds who were of similar qualities, character, age, sports and dresses, who were made violent by the sweet-sounding flutes and lutes, who were engaged in singing slowly, and with a high and loud tone, who were delighted in lovely dancing accompanied by singing and instrumental music, due to their unsteady creeper-like arms, whose groups of moving bells tied to the cavities of their fat loins and inside their shanks, were sounding, who were roaming, who were maddened, who had made charming ornaments out of the nails of hyenas; who was surrounded by children who were speaking indistinctly but sweetly; and who was all round served by the rows of the very charming, beautiful cowherdesses whose

braids were big and who walked slowly due to (large) hips, who had a line of hair manifested on the three folds, fragile due to the burden of the heavy breasts, whose body-creepers of that tree of Cupid blossomed by the nectar of the musical instruments like the extremely sweet and lovely flute were adorned with horripilation charming like buds that had shot forth, who continuously had the drops of fatigue resembling the spray on unsteady ripples of that ocean of sexual feeling increased by the laughter, who had unbearable affliction along with tremor spreading over their distressed bodies, all the vital parts of which were crushed by shower of Cupid in the form of his sharp glances from the extremely lovely and gentle bows of cilli (i.e. his eyes), who longed for drinking the nectar of the beauty of his very lovely dress and form, who were the rivers flooded with the water of love, whose lotus-like eyes were gentle and unsteady, who were repeatedly served by a swarm of bees greedy of the honey dripping from the full-blown flowers dropping from their beautiful braids, whose words were faltering and soft due to intoxication caused by intense passion of love, whose buttocks appeared beautiful due to the lustre of the ends of the silken garments which were getting loose due to their knots being untied by the unsteady girdles, who had filled the quarters with anklets inlaid with jewels, due to gentle plantings of their stumbling and charming lotus-like pairs of eyes which were broad and had beautiful eye-lashes, whose ear-rings were bright, whose sprout-like reddish lips were fading due to the torment caused by wind of the longest breath (i.e. sigh), whose lotus-like hands were shining with many presents.

52-56. A man should remember him (i.e. Kṛṣṇa) whose entire body was worshipped by the wreaths of the lotuses hidden in the sheaths of their long, unsteady, blue eyes; who has a body which is the abode of sports, which tastes the honey from the lotus-like faces of those innocent ones, which through love has the row of bees in the form of the damsels of bewitching eyes, which is beautiful; a man should remember outside (the group) of the cowherdesses, the cowherds and the beasts, the host of divinities, desiring riches, and led by Brahmā, Śiva and Indra, and intent on praising him. (A man should remember) on his right side, a host of sages, bent upon (following) the

tradition due to their strong desire for religious merit; behind him, (a man should remember) the chief meditating saints like Sanaka, desiring salvation through abstract meditation; (he should remember) on his left, yakṣas, siddhas, gandharvas, vidyādharas and cāraṇas with their beloveds and with kinnaras, so also the chiefs of celestial nymphs desiring (the fulfilment of) their desires through dancing, singing and sounds of musical instruments, who are white like a conch, the moon and the kunda (flower), who know all the Vedas, whose matted hair is tawny, like streaks of lightning, and remembering me (i.e. Nārada), Brahmā's son who desires spotless devotion to his feet, who has given up the company of any one else, who pleases (the lord) with charming modulations in the seven musical orders and the three gamuts endowed with qualities of various notes, should devoutly think of him.

57. The man, of a sharp and clear intellect, having thus meditated upon the son of Nanda, should again deliberately and devoutly worship him in his own body and outside with splendour. O best brāhmaṇas, I have told you all that was desired by you.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOUR

Dialogue between Śambhu and Rāma

Om, salutation to Śrī Gaṇeśa.

The sages said:

1. O illustrious one, tell us again the wonderful account of Rāma, which is the all-in-all of Rāma's greatness and which gives delight to the devotees.

Sūta said:

2-6a. The wise son of Daśaratha, after having performed the excellent horse-sacrifice, engaged himself in the worldly deeds and in acts laid down in the sacred texts. Śaṅkara, the

magnanimous one, desiring to go to Ayodhyā, lived with Pārvatī on the bank of Sarayū. Great-souled sages like Kaśyapa approached that Śaṅkara, of a universal form, and asked him of unlimited lustre. (They said:) "O best sage, wherefrom have you come with your wife? For what deed have you come with your wife? For what deed have you come here? Which country are you bent on going to?"

Śaṅkara said:

6b-12a. I am a brāhmaṇa named Śambhu and living on Himālaya. I am going to see Rāma; I have a great deed to do. That king interested in listening to the Purāṇas, invites (i.e. has invited) me. You too may come. Rāma will be glad.

Then all the sages and Śambhu went with a desire to see Rāma. Knowing them to have arrived, Vasiṣṭha informed Rāma. Then he with his family-priest (i.e. Vasiṣṭha) quickly came out (to meet them). Offering them materials of worship and water for washing their feet, he honoured all the sages. He who curbed his enemies, took them into the best mansion. Having given a seat to each one of them, the best among the Raghus, honoured the sages, seated them on the seats one by one with words of welcome. Pleasing them with sweet words, he said these words to them who were seated on the seats.

Śrī Rāma said:

12b-15a. Today my existence has become fruitful; today I have obtained the fruit of my penance. Today the time of obtaining the fruit of my practice of the lores has come. Today my dead ancestors are pleased; my kingdom has become fruitful today. My (good) conduct has become fruitful today; today my learning has become fruitful.

To king Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, who was speaking like this, the brāhmaṇas, Kaśyapa and others said:

The sages said:

15b-21. This brāhmaṇa is Śambhu who is conversant with all sacred texts, who knows the essential truth of the Vedas and

the Vedāṅgas, who is engaged in the good of all beings, who lives at Kailāsa, and who is always determined in (practising) penance, who is comparable to Brahmā in divine glory, who is the best of those who know the Vedas, who is comparable to Viṣṇu in his affection for brāhmaṇas, and to Śaṅkara in (showing) grace. Such is (this) very lustrous best brāhmaṇa Śambhu who knows the eighteen Purāṇas and who is well-versed in Mīmāṁsā[1] and Nyāya[2]. Due to your great luck this best sage has come (here). This best sage invited by you, has come from Kailāsa, O lord. Therefore, O you descendant of Raghu, O illustrious one, ask him (about) the excellent account of the Purāṇas. We, desiring to hear (it), have today come (to you). The knowledge of a man who has mastered the Vedas and knows all sacred texts, but has not heard the Purāṇas, is not accurate.

Sūta said:

22. Thus addressed by the sages who had realized the truth, the best of the Raghus, eager to listen to the Purāṇas, got incomparable delight.

Śrī Rāma said:

23-26. O excellent, best sage, I desire to hear from you all that, viz. the varieties of the worship of the Phallus, the greatness of the Phallus, the greatness of the name of the great lord (Śiva), the importance of worship, the significance of salutation, the greatness of wisdom, the importance of offering water, so also of offering incense, O best one, so also of offering lamps, aloewood etc. and the importances of flowers, the account destroying sins

1. Mīmāṁsā—One of the six systems of Indian Philosophy. It was originally divided into two systems: the Pūrvamīmāṁsā and the Uttaramīmāṁsā. The former is said to be founded by Jaimini. The latter is ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa. The two systems have very little in common between them. The Pūrvamīmāṁsā, concerns itself chiefly with the correct interpretation of the ritualistic part of the Veda and the settlement of doubts in regard to Vedic texts. The Uttaramīmāṁsā, also called Brahmamīmāṁsā, deals mainly with the nature of Brahman or the Supreme Spirit.

2. Nyāya—A system of Indian Philosophy founded by Gautama, also known as Gotama and Akṣapāda. The system is primarily concerned with the conditions of correct thinking and with the means of gaining a true knowledge of reality.

from many tales and traditions, so also the four goals of human life, viz. *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa* and the means of (attaining) them.

Śambhu said:

27-33. O Rāma, Rāma, O you of great (i.e. mighty) arms, O Rāghava, you are meritorious, (since) though attached to (i.e. engaged in the administration of) the kingdom you have a liking for hearing the Purāṇas. O Rāma, it would be due to the service of the great and resorting to holy places. That is the tongue that would sing (the praise of) Śiva; that is the heart which is dedicated to him; those two hands alone that worship him, are fit to be praised. That body alone is best born among all existences which brightens with horripilation at the narration (of the virtues) of Viṣṇu. O great king, you are blessed since your mind has moved in (asking) questions about him.

Immediately thereafter couriers, hurrying and tired, came (there). The best among the Raghus took a letter from the hands of (one of) them, and read it. Rāma thought to his mind: 'How has it taken place?' Śambhu who was in the guise of a brāhmaṇa and accompanied by his wife, then asked Rāma: "O you descendant of Kakutstha, what are you thinking about when the sages are sitting in front of you?" Hearing his words, Rāma said to the best sages:

Śrī Rāma said:

34-41. Oh, how is it that Bibhīṣaṇa seeing the Phallus of Śiva, (called) Rāmeśvara and installed by me, is bound with chains by the crooked, wicked-minded Drāviḍas? Think about it with your (i.e. by applying your) mind.

Thinking (about it) the best sages were unable to know (it even) a little. They said to Rāma: "We do not know." Then Rāma said: "O best ones, having duly seen (i.e. looked into) a Purāṇa tell (me) all that. After that the cause of your ignorance may be considered. Which Purāṇa should be looked into; similarly which should be avoided; which verse is excellent; which is other than that; what kind of worshipper should be there and

for what kind of act; and on seeing (its) verdict (*obscure*!) as to how the worship should be done by devotees." Hearing these words of Rāma, those best brāhmaṇas spoke to Rāma whose mind was full of anxiety: "O Rāma, we shall not tell it. One who knows the Purāṇa, should look into it." Hearing that, Rāma, full of modesty, asked Śambhu; he too, who was very intelligent, hearing those words, said:

Śambhu said:

42-50a. A very intelligent man who lives by (expounding) the Purāṇas, who deserves honour, who has studied (the scriptures of) the branch of Veda to which he belongs, who is pure, who knows the essence of Mīmāṁsā, who is learned, who censures falsehood, who looks equally upon all gods, who loves Śiva, who mutters the Śatarudriya hymn, who maintains sacred fire, who is a great speaker, who is especially a follower of the Yajurveda, should worship the book (i.e. the text of the Purāṇa). The book is written on palm leaves, is auspicious and is written in the divine script (i.e. in Sanskrit). It is extensive as it is bound (together) and has at the same time the syllable 'Om' (at its beginning). At the end of the two vertical lines here would be the line being the first line of Om. Near it should be the letter 'a'. Beginning with the topmost part and hanging down it should have an angle. That which has a (vertical) line to the right (of the letter 'a'), should be known to be the letter 'ā'. The letter 'i' is known to have two dots and bent like (the figure) six. (Long) 'ī' is said to be (formed) by a line on the left top of it. Except Om, every letter has a line on its top. But on it there is a vertical line and at its end there is (the figure) like that of a sickle. That should be known as 'u'. (Long) 'ū' is formed by means of two (figures of) sickles. Bhāratī (i.e. Sarasvatī) has said that other letters are (to be formed) like these.

50b-54a. That Purāṇa which is written in this script alone, is praiseworthy. (The Purāṇas are:) Brahma, Padma, Vaiṣṇava, Mārtaṇḍa, (the one) narrated by Nārada, Mārkaṇḍeya, and Āgneya, Kaurma and Vāmana, Gāruḍa; Laiṅga (is also) said (to be one of them); Skānda, Mātsya, Nṛsiṁha; O Rāma, Kapila is also said to be (a Purāṇa); so also Varāha; Brahmavaivarta is recommended for omens; (and there are) Śiva, Bhāgavata,

Daurga (i.e. of Durgā), Bhaviṣyottara also known by the subtitle Bhaviṣya. One should avoid others.

54b-61a. Untying the (string of) the book (the reader) should put the hallowed book on a jewelled stool. He should put on washed garments; he should bathe and be pure; he should be without wrath and without distress; he should, having first worshipped his soul and having made a mental resolve, meditate upon the white (-complexioned) Sarasvatī, of a pleased face and holding a goad, a rosary, a noose and a book. The worshipper should begin the worship after first having duly meditated upon Śiva whose figure is(white) like the cow's milk, who has three eyes, whose vehicle is the bull (Nandī), whose face is smiling, who is tranquil, who has put on a white garment, who is fearless, whose both arms have been (tossed) up, who has a crown (on his head), whose right hand is put on the left, who gives boons, who is richly adorned with many jewels, whose half seat is occupied by (Pārvatī) the daughter of (the Himālaya) Mountain, whose lotus-like feet are being meditated upon by many chief sages, who is being praised by Vedas embodied, so also by Purāṇas, so also whose lotus-like feet are waited upon by all other people.

61b-64a. The consecration of the pitcher (should be done with the utterance of the hymn) *Āpo vā idam* ('This is water'). Having taken that water, he consecrates (the water) in the vessel. He, having (consecrated) himself, and having praised (Brahman) with the hymn *Tat sad Brahma*, should then invoke all the vessels. He should worship Sarasvatī with the Ṣoḍaśārcana (worshipping sixteen times) with the ṛc *Yad vāg*, or he should do it with the recital of the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn), or with the Gāyatrī hymn.

64b-69. He should worship the Purāṇa by (first saying) 'Om, salutation to the lord, such and such Purāṇa (is being expounded).' With the recital of the hymn *Kāṇḍāt* he should bring dūrvā (grass) and worship it (saying:) 'Om, salutation to the respectable Dūrvā'. The worship should be done along with (that of) the guardians of the quarters. Then a (young) girl should be hououred. (She should be) auspicious and should be above five years but below ten years. She should not have attained puberty. He should carefully worship her with fragrant substance, flow-

ers, sacred rice grains, incense, lamp, tāmbūla and ornaments. The worshipper should make the young girl recite this hymn: 'Speak the truth, speak what is agreeable; O venerable Sarasvatī, salutation to you, salutation to you.'

70-75a. According to the meaning of the order of the (words of the) Gāyatrī (hymn) he should make her keep near the book two dūrvās, then under it with the ṛc *Sahasra paramā*. The wise one (i.e. the worshipper) should give three pairs of dūrvās into her hand; after that she should throw (i.e. put) three small sticks into the joints of the book. Throwing them (away), he should again give her (small sticks), saying *Śivābhyām namaḥ* ('salutation to Śivas'). The verse in between two leaves suggests the success in the work (to be undertaken). O Rāghava, if the verse would come to an end on the previous leaf, then he should read the verse on the next leaf, and having discerned it, should read it aloud. The wise one should read it slowly, and should explain it slowly. Here no hurry should be done, (as) Sarasvatī gets angry due to haste. The time should be the quarter of a ghaṭikā (i.e. twentyfour minutes); hurry would be said to be done (if less time than that is taken).

75b-79. One should not hasten the speaker known as the brāhmaṇa after Vyāsa. The speaker should discern the meaning in his mind; having discerned it, he should not say what is opposed to it, O Rāma. Leaving the verse, whether proper or improper (found) in the book, if the worshipper reads another verse, it should be known to be like that only; a discord is not recommended. That verse has appeared there due to luck (i.e. chance), and luck is more powerful (than anything else). Since in the hearing (i.e. the text) there is no fault of the brāhmaṇa (who reads it), so one should not wonder; the course of destiny is crooked.

80-84a. If there is a change in a letter due to water (etc.) on the leaf, he should discard that command, and should read another (verse). Then the third (verse) should be read, and then decision (about the meaning) should be taken. The five other than the class of letters beginning with 'pa' (i.e. labials) end without a visarga. A verse not containing a mark of praise is commended for omens. The wise should always avoid these in (i.e. while finding out) an omen: the beginning of a

chapter; its end; a useless leaf or script; repetition of what is (already) stated; double (i.e. repeated) mention; a burnt leaf; script that has disappeared; doubtful letters.

84b-86a. A question should be known to be of two types depending upon its two varieties: radiant and calm. The calm (-type) also should be known to be of two types: depending upon the development of creation or maintenance. There (i.e. out of these) the calm marked with the characteristics (noted) before is recommended. Certain varieties of acts useful for mortals are (now being) described.

86b-89a. Someone taking up the mission of someone (else) becomes the questioner (i.e. asks questions). When he asks a question, what does he remember? He again holds a leaf. A leaf there is recommended. Or if a reader somehow getting delighted, and being capable of (reading) it (sees a text) intent upon detachment or glorificatory, then that should be avoided and another auspicious for that matter (should be looked for).

89b-92. Such a question as 'A dead man grasps the meaning of words' conduces to inauspiciousness. The indication of success is desired in case of a question about discussion and victory. Creation is also here. There would be one who would praise. In case of its being cruel, the victory is due to trouble. When it is calm and mixed, one would be a best merchant through means. The description of a city etc. which is mediocre, may be excellent; so also in the description of the thoughts about Kali and in that of the element of love. In the consideration of the administration of kingdom the mark of it is auspicious.

93-101a. The wise ones (should tell) what is proper for whom after (due) consideration. In case of (something) to be done about praise and detachment destruction is enjoined. By means of an error the undertaking is a little (i.e. partially) accomplished, and the undertaker of it cannot go through it. O Rāma, in the consideration of peace the meaning of one thing would have another significance. There will be the end of a visarga and the inversion of the former part. If there is another significance at the end of a chapter or at the end of a section, then (it indicates) the destruction of the undertaking. Therefore, if somebody sneezes, or if the book drops down, or if someone is struck on the head etc. it is a dishonour to the speaker, and as a result the

omen perishes. Therefore, when such a fault (is noticed), the man should avoid that omen. If there is a simile, there would (just) be the semblance of the undertaking, but not in reality; in other cases progeny (is indicated); (reference to) creation is said to give a mediocre fruit. In the decision of a meritorious undertaking eulogy is excellent anywhere. Eulogy in case of a marriage, medicines, gifts, dealings, agriculture, if it is proper, incurs no fault in being narrated. In the case of that eulogy which is improper, the undertaking does not succeed.

101b-103a. When the meaning of a verse is not understood, or when it is disregarded in a Purāṇa etc., or when there is fleeing, or the advice about a country or about the possibility of a disease, or when there is (a mention about) an attack by a thief etc. then the undertaking would terribly perish, if the question is (of a) tranquil (nature). So say those who know the ancient (accounts).

Rāma said:

103b-105a. How will he who knows the meaning of the Purāṇas, when he is not told, or when he has not heard, explain the meaning to the listeners? The decision of this (should be made). (Please) illustrate it to me, and let the meaning also be thought over. O intelligent one, you please tell it even if it explains a part.

Śambhu said:

105b-111. The meaning of the verse: *Madhūni ca madhūnyatra madhurmadhubhujam madhuḥ; madhunā madhunādyarthaṁ viṣāṇi ca viṣāṇi ca* is unintelligible; it is not recommended in (finding out) an omen. So also the verse: *Rutī rute rute roraurīri rāraṁ rarīraram; evaṁ karoti śuddhātmā brāhmaṇo brahmaṇotithiḥ*. This verse is intelligible in part (the latter half is intelligible: a pure-souled brāhmaṇa, the guest of Brahman, acts like this). (Therefore) it is not recommended in (finding out) an omen. O best of the Raghus, such and other verses occur in the Purāṇas. They have no explanation. Their text would be pre-eminent. How can the faultlessness of the speaker and the listener in the vows and restraints (be had)? How is it that the Purāṇas are not to be regarded like (i.e. on par with) the Vedas? The idea about the

meaning may be had on reciting it thrice and on thinking. The meaning of the verse, and the manner of acting (according to it) should be actually thought out. In this case the verse is (more) powerful; the manner of acting is inferior to it.

112-115a. If the leaf is useless, if the labour is fruitless, and if the leaf is burnt, then the undertaking would be lost. When the manner is hidden on the leaf, then there is lack of coordination in the undertaking. In case the leaf is withered, or if the writing on it has disappeared, then the destruction (of the undertaking) is said (to take place). In case the letters are wrong, the trouble taken is fruitless; (so also) in case of repetition or lack of agreement. If there is a comparison, the undertaking may or may not succeed. Or success may be delayed; so also when the letters are clear, there is a doubt about (the success of) the undertaking within days that are indicated.

115b-123. O king, an omen from a Purāṇa should not be seen every day. Similarly a man should not see a Purāṇa (for an omen) after he gets up after having eaten (food). Having performed worship on the night of the previous days or in the morning of the next day a man should see (the Purāṇa) for an omen, or should do so immediately (after the worship). He should tell about a special omen, particularly with reference to the manner (in which the act is to be conducted), in all auspicious deeds; the śrāddha offered to a dead person should be excluded. Inflicting a punishment, a curse, a change in the country, killing beings like demons and wicked beings is pure. Immediately after the burning of the dead body, there are spitting, vomitting, weeping, laughter, loathsomeness, pain, bad dreams, confusion etc. causing sins. So also covering with a garment, troubling, quarrel and death. Coming out of cruel (animals) and fear from the great (are there). All these and other manners should be avoided. When getting wealth is to be considered the royal creation is conducive to happiness. The rise of the Planets, the healing of diseases is also told here. What is the use of talking much here? That particular relation should be considered.

124-127. Of all the Purāṇas Skanda is recommended for this. Some choose Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa; others choose Rāmāyaṇa. There is no fault in the Vaiṣṇava Purāṇa like oaths etc. There are faults in Skanda and Rāmāyaṇa; but they are (on

a) small scale. But only a devotee of Viṣṇu and none else is able to worship it. If the worship takes place without (the worshipper being of) a good conduct, then inauspiciousness creeps in, and the omen is not successful, as a bull bound to a branch full of (i.e. allowing) all movements.

Sūta said:

128-129. Rāma who was thus advised by that brāhmaṇa Śambhu, proceeded to (find out) an omen in ascertaining (the condition of) Bibhīṣaṇa. Rāma said to Vasiṣṭha who knew the entire truth, who was proficient in (understanding the meaning of) the Purāṇas: "(Please) look into the Purāṇa".

130-132. Vasiṣṭha also said to that Rāma: "O Rāma, I am not able to speak or look into (the Purāṇa) in the vicinity of this sage." Then Rāma told Śambhu whose face was being observed by the sages: "You know the truth; you are proficient in (understanding the meaning of) the Purāṇas. So you may please tell me about the omen for my undertaking." Saying, "All right", Śambhu purified himself and became the worshipper.

133-136. Having worshipped the Skanda (Purāṇa) duly, he put the question: "Is my devotee Bibhīṣaṇa bound by a chain?" Then in three ways these three verses indicating that were seen. "Having bound the ocean, the best of Rāghavas checked the demons in the city (of Laṅkā). They, the best among those having gigantic bodies, went out of the city of Laṅkā to fight (with Rāma). The communities will have banners on their mansions. Brāhmaṇas will have Śiva as their emblem, and women will have their hair as the banners in Kaliyuga."

137-138. Thus praised, the great lord Śiva said to your deities: "I shall free your wives restrained by the demon Malla." Having observed three verses, he told about the certainty of (Bibhīṣaṇa's) being bound. (He said to Rāma:) "O Rāma, he will be soon freed. There is no doubt about it."

139-142. Having heard these words of that sage (Śambhu), Rāma, along with sages and monkeys, quickly went out to look for Bibhīṣaṇa. He quickly entered the city named Śrīraṅga. The kings that lived there worshipped Rāma. Rāma who was worshipped by them, asked them: "Where is Bibhīṣaṇa?" (They

replied:) "O god Śrī Rāma, we do not know this account". The descendant of Kakutstha (i.e. Rāma) sent the monkeys in all directions. Then the best monkeys after having gone (and looked for him) did not at all see (i.e. find) him.

143-144. Then Rāma said to that sage Śambhu: "Tell me later." Then that sage Śambhu accompanied by Rāma and followed by the sages, saying "show me" and (being told) "All right", went to a hamlet of brāhmaṇas. The brāhmaṇas there when honoured and asked showed the demon bound with many chains in an underground chamber.

145-151. Then Rāma said: "O brāhmaṇas, what has he done?" They said: "(He has committed) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. An old brāhmaṇa, an excellent, religious, aged, slim brāhmaṇa stayed in a secluded place in a grove for meditation. Having gone there, Bibhīṣaṇa hurt him with his foot (i.e. kicked him). The brāhmaṇa too, who was very much bruised, could not move even a step. Though struck by us with fatal (weapons), the wicked Bibhīṣaṇa did not die. Therefore, O Rāma, slay this sinful one and be righteous". Rāma who had suspicion, said to the brāhmaṇas: "Death is better for me (than killing my devotee). How can my devotee be killed by me? I have given him kingdom and long life. He will continue to be like that (i.e. continue to be a king and live long). Everywhere punishment is prescribed for the masters for the offence of (i.e. committed by) their servants." Having heard (these) words of Rāma, the brāhmaṇas, through amazement, said these words:

The brāhmaṇas said:

152-154a. O Rāma, death of one bound with strips is not acceptable to the sages. Think along with the best sages like Vasiṣṭha as to what is beneficial.

The sages, asked by Rāma, told the expiation: "The (sin due to the) murder of a brāhmaṇa (committed) through ignorance, is removed by means of expiations. Thus murder (committed) through ignorance requires expiation.

154b-159. That Bibhiṣaṇa should give (to brāhmaṇas) three hundred and sixty cows." Those brāhmaṇas who had bound (Bibhīṣaṇa) saying, "All right", said to one another: "We shall

free that demon. Let him go through an expiation." Having liberated the demon, the brāhmaṇas reported it to Rāma. Rāma also would not talk to him (but) said what was relevant: "Having bathed and having asked the angry sages, (and having) then (gone through) the expiation, the sinful demon may approach me." Having heard these words of Rāma, the demon, united with the sin, went through the expiation as told by the sages, and went to Rāma. He, with his soul purified by means of expiation, bowed down to Rāma. In the assembly, Rāma, laughing (i.e. smiling) said these words to him.

Śrī Rāma said:

160-162a. O son of Pulastya, from today do whatever is beneficial after thinking (properly), since, O demon, this exertion on our part was due to you. Be kind everywhere, since you are my servant.

When Rāma had (thus) settled the matter, all the sages said: "How is it that ignorance quickly overtook us?"

Śambhu said:

162b. O brāhmaṇas, due to the contempt of brāhmaṇas (that took place). The ignorance will perish.

The sages said:

163. He was charming in Tretāyuga. The Purāṇas also were entire. How will this Bhārata be employed at the end of Dvāpara?

Sūta said:

164-170. The Purāṇas are just like that; they have the same names. Today even they are told by Vyāsa; it is not otherwise. Even today the same is the rule; (and the same is) the fruit of hearing the Purāṇa. Even Mahābhārata excels in (explaining) the omens. Having worshipped just one Ādiparvan, a man should take note of the decision. Or for the decision regarding a matter all the Parvans are recommended. In this case also all the characteristics of a verse etc. mentioned before are (applicable). A particular meaning from the connection of words in a sentence

may be had, or another purport (may be had) from verses. The import is to be grasped. The explanation of a matter etc. is to be done only from the meaning. Where a meaning is seen, (it should be understood that) the primary substance is narrated. Here the determination (of the significance) should be done from the meaning of words. Therefore, everywhere the wise should not take another meaning.[1]

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIVE

The Importance of Sacred Ash

The sages said:

1. What did the illustrious Rāma do thereafter? What did the magnanimous sages do after that?

Sūta said:

2-9. When Rāmacandra was seated comfortably, (so also) Bibhīṣaṇa, the lord of monkeys, the best sages said to Śambhu: "Tell us a meritorious tale." Having heard their words, Śaṁkara said to Pārvatī: "This is the extremely beautiful house of a certain brāhmaṇa. It is adorned with a lovely garden, wells and creepers. It has (as it were) invited Cupid by means of the rows of humming bees. The sun is, as it were, proceeding to ascend to the mid-day position. We (shall) have bathed in the water of a beautiful well, and (shall have) put on fine garments. We (shall have) besmeared (our bodies with) thick, excellent sandal paste ground (i.e. mixed) with musk. We (shall) have firmly braided hair ornamented with the wreaths of the sallakī (flowers). Having tasted the tāmbūla that is large and dense and excellent and being glad and delighted, we shall remain comforting each other on a bed that is strewn in an auspicious house furnished with artificial jets, full of notes of peacocks along with sweet songs (sung) outside. If the face having a broad smile and red

1. Verses like 45ff. 74ff, 85ff, 91, 92, 108, 109ff. etc. are obscure.

lips will be kissed, then we shall have enjoyed the fruit of the mundane existence."

10-14a. Having heard these words spoken, the sages got angry and said: "Why have you told us these very auspicious words now? Due to your attachment to your beloved you made an unmeaning talk. You did not do our words (i.e. what we had asked you)." Then from the face of Śambhu who was full of anger, a very wonderful flame went out; and she too had a terrible face. She seized the wife of a certain sage and was intent upon fleeing quickly, but was frightened on seeing Rāma. Rāma too said, "I shall free the brāhmaṇa-woman." Again and again talking of liberating (the brāhmaṇa-woman), he went by Puṣpaka only.

14b-17a. Rāma did not remember (i.e. he forgot) to fix the arrow onto the bow. Śambhu also, seeing very auspicious forests and abodes, and strange cities, did not remember Rāma. Then in a moment Rāma reached the great mountain Lokāloka. Then Rāma, seeing the mountain full of houses and paths (said to the brāhmaṇas): "O illustrious brāhmaṇas, tell me which way the brāhmaṇa-woman has gone."

17b-20a. They said: "This way she has gone to the dark side of the mountain." Rāma with a pale face thought: 'Oh, it is bad'. Then Śambhu, of great lustre, gave matchless light. Due to the prowess of that light, Rāma went after that female deity to whom sacrifices are offered for destructive and magical purposes. The great region was full of darkness and without beings. From the primordial egg to the fragment of a broken jar, it spread over a hundred crores of yojanas.

20b-23a. In the darkness was settled a great silver (piece of) land. There was the city of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu), having lustre like that of a crore of suns. Seeing it, the best sages along with Rāma, were amazed. Thinking (i.e. they thought): 'What is this? How can we enter it? Could it be the fire at the time of the end of the world due to the magic power of the highest lord? Shall we die today or shall we have bliss?'

23b-30. When the sages, along with Rāma, were thus full of anxiety, Śambhu said: "O Rāma, listen to what I tell you today. For you I have brought about this illusion. This is no wonder. This is the great city of Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu). It is bright with

lustre. It cannot be destroyed by heat or cold. It is accessible through knowledge (only). It is not visible to the (physical) eyes. Look above at Brahmā and others who are worshipping it. Look in all directions at the pure sages who are worshipping it. Look at the four Vedas, praising the Highest Position (i.e. the highest god). O Rāghava, see this Highest Lustre which the meditating sages like Sanaka, resorting to abstract meditation, are meditating upon. See also this Romaśa going round and saluting. Look at these crores and crores of best sages like Vālakhilya. Look at the Highest Position (i.e. the highest god) being worshipped by all women like Lakṣmī. It is described as the Brahman having a form and without a form. The ignorant do not (i.e. cannot) see it. (Only) those having the eyes of knowledge (can) see it."

31-34. On (hearing) the words of Śambhu all worshipped Acyuta, so also Girikarṇī, Tulasī, Mallikā and Māruta. (They saw) the high-souled ones worshipping the illustrious Janārdana. They saw Nārada having matted hair and a lute, uttering loudly the word (i.e. name) *Nārāyaṇa*, having a large beard and a sacred thread. He too thought to his mind: 'Who is this?' He (i.e. Nārada), full of joy, fell at the feet of Śambhu.

35-36a. The sage mentally muttered the five-lettered incantation dedicated to Śiva. "I am blessed; I am favoured; today my life is fruitful, (since) I have known your place which is saluted by Brahmā and others, which is inaccessible".

36b-42. Then Śambhu said to Nārada: "Do not say so. Behave with me in such a way that they do not recognise me. Go quickly and tell Viṣṇu about my arrival in a short time." Then, he hurriedly went and informed Viṣṇu of everything. Then he, the yogin, taking the auspicious water with materials for worship, along with Lakṣmī, and surrounded by crores and crores (of followers), seizing Nārada with his hand went (forth to greet him). The word *Viṣṇu* does not fit in the verse! He, having Garuḍa as his banner said: "Salutation, salutation to Śaṅkara." Viṣṇu honoured all with materials of worship and water for washing the feet. He, of an immeasurable intellect, made them enter (i.e. took them into) the auspicious Nārāyaṇapura (i.e. city of Viṣṇu). Then remaining in the best house, Nārāyaṇa said: "How have these come (here)? Who is this king

of great glory? Human beings cannot enter this (place). This is inaccessible even to Brahmā and others."

Śambhu said:

43-46a. We, dressed as sages, have come (here); and this valourous king is Rāmacandra who is a portion of you. O Keśava, he desires to see your wife.

Nārāyaṇa (i.e. Viṣṇu) saying, "All right", said to Rāma "Enter (here)". Then having entered the residence, having seen Lakṣmī, and bowing through modesty he saluted her, and said (these) meritorious words (to her): "I am blessed; there is no doubt about it. Tell me what you feel."

Śrī Devī said:

46b-48. O Rāghava, you are young; you are attracted by love for sensual enjoyments; you are handsome. That Sītā, beautiful in all limbs, is your wife. Formerly you were separated from her, and being afflicted due to separation from her were, as it were, sinking. Tell me all that or you will not speak. Words accompanied by smile attract the hearts of young persons.

49-53. Having heard all those words, Rāmabhadra who was restrained and composed, having bowed down his lotus-like face, desired to go out from there. Having tormented the best among the Raghus, with a lotus—an arrow of Cupid—goddess Padmā, to whom Padmavana was dear, went out after him. Knowing Rāma to be one devoted to his only wife, they came to the king (i.e. Rāma) whose entire body was trembling and whose steps were faltering. Seeing that Śiva and Viṣṇu were very much amazed. "Oh, the firmness of his mind! His heart is not subjugated by Cupid. See his controlled steadiness. Rāma is well-known due to that. In every respect he has auspiciousness. Nothing inauspicious is (to be found) anywhere (about him)." Then Rāma said (these) words: "O lord, I would go."

54-60. Then, Rāma, permitted by Viṣṇu, went, along with the sages, along with Śambhu and Nārāyaṇa, by the Puṣpaka (plane). He quickly went to the Lokāloka (mountain), and thence to the sweet ocean. From there he went to the islands

and seas and then to Jambūdvīpa. He stayed in the hermitage of Bhāradvāja on the bank of Gautamī. Bhāradvāja, the best among the sages and the glorious one, having bathed in the great river and surrounded by his disciples, saw the Puṣpaka (aeroplane). The great sage then duly worshipped Rāma of mighty arms, so also Śiva, Nārāyaṇa, and the sages, and said to them: "O you best ones, please enjoy (yourselves) in my hermitage." On (these) words of the sage, Rāma somehow said, "All right!" Then Vasiṣṭha spoke (these) words to Rāma who had bathed in the great river, who had made offerings to deities etc. and who desired (i.e. was about) to take food: "O Rāma, religious merit would be lost if the obligatory śrāddha is not performed".

Śrī Rāma said:

61-64a. O revered one, if a śrāddha is missed on a new-moon day, on an eclipse-day, at the time of great portentous calamity, at a sacred place, at the time of the passage of a planetary body through a zodiacal sign, it is done again. An obligatory śrāddha should not at all be done again. These are your words. As when the death of my mothers took place, and when it was the mourning period, the obligatory śrāddha was not at all performed. But it was performed, as told by you, at the time of a great portentous calamity etc.

Vasiṣṭha said:

64b-66a. All these sages and this brāhmaṇa Śambhu are here. The decision will be fully made from their mouth (i.e. by them).

All the sages, deciding together, said to Śambhu: "O best brāhmaṇa, tell us everything (since) you are great."

Śambhu said:

66b-68. The (obligatory) śrāddha may be avoided (on such occasions). (But) it should be done again. I am telling about (the circumstance when) the period of impurity has approached, and when there are (other) obstacles. They prescribe all śrāddhas like the monthly, or offering jars of water, and all

other śrāddhas, so also the annual śrāddha (to be performed) after the impurity period (is over).

69-70a. There is no doubt that all (the śrāddhas) that were avoided due to the difficulty caused by the period of impurity, should be performed immediately after it. In the same way all monthly śrāddhas, the annual śrāddha, or (any other śrāddha not performed) due to any other difficulty, should be performed immediately after the period of impurity.

70b-74a. One desiring merit should perform a śrāddha on the eleventh day of the dark fortnight. If it is not performed at that time, then it is done on the new-moon day, (or) it should be performed without difficulty on (any of the) subsequent days. O Rāma, the śrāddha which should have been performed on the new-moon day in the dark fortnight, was not performed. If the month of the day of death is not somehow known (i.e. if the day is known but not the month), then the day in Mārgaśīrṣa or Māgha is recommended for the śrāddha. But when the day is not known, but the month is known, the annual śrāddha should take place on the new-moon day of that month.

74b-76. If the day or the month of the death or going away of a person is not known, then that day (on which the news is got) should be taken as a day for the performance of the śrāddha. If that also is not known, i.e. due to not knowing the day or the month, one of the three, viz. new-moon day of Āśvina or of Mārgaśīrṣa or Māgha may be taken (as the day on which the śrāddha should be performed). The waxing of the moon should be taken for the śrāddha month after month.

77-82. The *Nitya* (i.e. obligatory) *śrāddha*, the *Kumbha śrāddha* should be performed even in the intercalary month, so also on an eclipse day, day of the birth of a son etc. or of an expiatory rite. When everything is planned, there is no fault in performing it even in the intercalary month. When the rite of śrāddha is at hand, if the man who has to perform the śrāddha, is unwell, he should appoint his wife, brother or his disciple to perform it. In his absence the rite called śrāddha does not suffer. He should appoint (i.e. invite) one who would eat (the food at the śrāddha and feed him) according to his capacity at an obligatory śrāddha; so also at the monthly śrāddha performed on a new-moon day, other than the day on which the person is

dead. If he is unable, he should appoint his son or a brāhmaṇa. The śrāddha to be offered by a man who is appointed to do a royal job or employed as a servant, should be got done by a brāhmaṇa; so also in case of all difficulties. The best brāhmaṇas do not perform a śrāddha in the morning.

83-88. No such restriction about time is ordained in the case of occasional śrāddhas. The course for one who is separated from his wife is said to be his sister's or daughter's son (obscure!). The latter should be near him. The date for a śrāddha to be performed every month should be touching the afternoon. When the new-moon day spreads over two days, it should be touching the afternoon. When the day ends between the two sunrises or when there is sameness the next day is recommended (for śrāddha). That new-moon day which lasts for two afternoons is *sama* (i.e. same). When the day ends between two sunrises, then the former is recommended; when it comprises two sunrises, the latter is recommended; and when it has sameness, the latter is (ordained). When the moon has waned, the śrāddha should be done on the parvan day. She (i.e. *tithi*) is feasible on the eighth part of the new-moon day.

89-90a. If she has not passed the eight parts, that should be taken as covering the midday, and that should be the day when a śrāddha is offered to one individual only. That day should be taken (for śrāddha), which covers the evening of a parvan day. That new-moon day which lasts for a part of the afternoon should be accepted for a śrāddha etc.

90b-92a. On the day of the death (anniversary) the day for the śrāddha would be three watches in the evening. When it has ended then, as told before, it should be performed during the three watches on the next day. Among the śrāddhas, the śrāddha performed on the next day brings about the destruction of the eldest son. When the day of the deceased has arrived, the śrāddha of the full-moon day should be performed. For a brāhmaṇa it is laid down to be covering the midday.

Rāma said:

92b-93a. Please tell us about the rule to be fully followed in the case of a śrāddha-rite or rites to be performed by a mortal, so also the occasional rites.

Śambhu said:

93b-96. When the day for the śrāddha has stood by, a man, being restrained, should, on the previous day, invite best brāhmaṇas endowed with the characteristics of a (good) brāhmaṇa. (On this day) he should eat once only. He should observe celibacy, and should not talk to the low-born ones. The performer of the śrāddha should perform brushing his teeth, anointing his body or clipping his nails on the previous day and should avoid these on the next day. He should follow the rules that are laid down; and should avoid all this. If the worship is to be done thrice, he should worship his deity in the morning.

97-101. If he who knows how to perform the rites, worships (his deity) at sunrise, then he should sleep on the (bare) ground and should do so on getting up in the morning. Having performed the rites to be performed in the morning after taking a bath, he becomes free from the three debts (to sages, gods and manes) and goes to that highest Brahman. He who worships Śiva at the time of sunrise, becomes lustrous like the sun and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva. He who worships after a ghaṭikā (i.e. 24 minutes) after sunrise, becomes bright like Rudra and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva. If he worships the lord in the second ghaṭikā (of the day), he becomes radiant like Vāyu and is honoured in the heaven of Śiva.

102-105. He who would perform Śiva's worship in the third ghaṭikā, becomes bright like Kubera and is honoured in Śiva's heaven. He who devoutly worships Śiva in the fourth, fifth, sixth or seventh ghaṭikā becomes like a god in Śiva's heaven. The worship should be done at that time at which it is ordained. Or he should take a vow, observe restrictions and should worship. He should observe the rule according to his capacity in the formalities. O lord, would a rite be (a proper rite), if the rule is violated?

Śrī Rāma said:

106-109. Where should the worship of Śaṅkara be done—of Śaṅkara who is the god of gods, who is of unlimited prowess, who destroys sins when remembered, and who also gives salvation when remembered, who is auspicious, who is of an auspicious form,

who knows the auspicious essential truth, who is Soma (i.e. Śiva), who is best adorned, whose eyes are best, who shines, who is of the form of Vedas, who is formless, who knows the essence of the Vedas, who knows the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas, who is to be known and cannot be known, who is a meditating saint, whose body is like cow's milk, who takes delight in bathing with cow's milk, who looks after the cows, who has three eyes, who has the three eyes in the form of the triad (of the Vedas) and who is powerful.

110-114. In between the questions he showed Rāma auspicious knowledge. He, seated as it were he had become a post, with his eyes fixed on the tip of his nose, with the stream of tears of joy trickling from his eyes and touching his cheeks, held in the lotus of his heart god Śiva whose body was very glossy like milk and was very charming. In the body of Rāma the reflection was seen. Seeing Śambhu having four hands and three eyes reflected thus, all the sages, Viṣṇu and the lord (Śiva) were very much amazed. Seeing Rāma, auspicious and of a bright form, remaining in Śambhu's chest, they kept mum for half a watch. He, referring to his question, said: "Please tell the whole thing."

Śambhu said:

115-117. According to one's desire worship is done of a stable image or of an unstable one. If an image etc. is not acquired, (then) the principal (thing) is Phallus worship. In that case also a man should carry on worship according to his authority. The Phallus worship, faulty or without a fault, is fruitful. The worship of an image, if faulty, does not become fruitful. The worship of a Phallus, fixed one or unstable, is recommended.

118-125. I shall (now) tell about the worship of an unstable (image etc.); so also about its installation and dismissal. No sage anywhere knows both these. The meditating saints always install the lord of gods, Śaṅkara, in their lotus-like hearts, take care of him, worship him and then take him out. The sacrificial priests have a great rite in worshipping the three-eyed god in fire. All the worshippers install the great lord on the Phallus of Śiva. The installation of the Phallus (should be done); its worship

should be performed; it should then be dismissed; the great Phallus of Śiva should be put on (the body); it should be decorated, be highly excellent, should be fashioned with gold, or silver, or with portions of silver; the top of it should be arranged with portions of bamboo, or tendrils of creepers, or with wood, or it would be arranged with a piece of cloth or with clay. It should be surrounded with a piece of cloth made fragrant; it should have a pair of washed garments, and endowed with a seat of clay. It should be without cold or heat, and should be endowed with four feet. It should have a portion of a hedge, and without worms and insects.

126-129a. Having covered on all sides that (Phallus of) Śiva with a soft, washed garment, and having put him (i.e. it) on an altar, one should again cover the lord; this, O Rāma, is said to be the decoration in front of the god. It should be installed, and the recitation (of the hymn) of the great lord should be done in a secluded place. Or it should be placed at the root of a wall or on an altar; so also in a protected region; and he should appoint a protector (to look after it). He should, along with restrictions, bring about the union with Prāṇa (i.e. the vital breath) etc.

129b-130a. This installation of the highest lord is said to be Rājasa (i.e. endowed with the quality of passion). The Sāttvika (i.e. of the nature of goodness) is that which is (kept) near oneself. The Tāmasa (i.e. of the nature of darkness) is again (like this):

130b-136. It should be worn so as to touch the body or would cover the entire body. The chief one is wearing it on the head. Brahmā had done like that. Wearing it by keeping it under the crown is said to be auspicious. Wearing it on the forehead is (also) recommended, as Lakṣmī had worn one auspicious one. Bāṇa had worn it on the head and also on the right (part of the) chest. The great meditating sage Harakarṇa had worn it on his ear. Some excellent demons fashioning one of iron, cut a part of their body and wear it there. Weak men having no abodes should wear it on their heads. Wearing it near the knot of the lower garment etc. is said to be most mean. When they get what is left over, it should be worn on the head. Those whose conduct is the meanest, and those who are sinners, should always wear a Liṅga. The wonder is: It is not in Yama's world.

Śrī Rāma said:

137. How does the worship of Śambhu change the (visit) to hell due to the writing firmly done by Citragupta on the forehead (of a person)? How does it destroy a sin?

Śambhu said:

138-143a. It destroys all the sin committed during hundreds of existences. Due to the destruction of all the sins and the recollection of the great god, the word *bhasma* (sacred ash) is mentioned. The wearing of (i.e. besmearing with) bhasma—the ash is excellent. As fire would destroy a writing on a tablet, in the same way besmearing the forehead with ash would destroy the writing of Yama. On its application to the face the sin done by the part above the ears would perish. On applying it to the neck sins due to enjoyments had by the throat would perish. (Its application) to the arms (destroys) the sin committed by the arms. (Its application) to the chest (destroys) sins committed by the mind. (Its application) to the navel (destroys) sins committed by the male generative organ. (Its application) to the back (destroys sins) committed by the anus. O Rāma, by applying it to the two sides (of the body) the sin due to embracing the wife of another man etc. perishes.

143b-149. In every case the application of bhasma (i.e. the sacred ash) is recommended to be in three lines. (Due to it) the holding of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva, and of the three fires (is secured). For the protection of the three worlds the application was done by him. Bhasma that is consecrated and put on (i.e. applied to) the fifteen places (of the body) is auspicious—the two visceras (like the lungs etc.), the pair of the arms, above the visceras. It is accepted by all to be applied by all bodies for the purpose of worship. There is no doubt that those who eat the sacred ash, who sleep on the sacred ash, and who have their bodies smeared with the sacred ash, and bathe with (i.e. apply) sacred ash, are always freed from sins. It is said to be giving a triple power at the initiation of a brāhmaṇa. It is a protector at the time of the birth of men, and at the time of being possessed by a ghost. It is a remedy for all for the destruction of the poison of a serpent etc. A devotee of Viṣṇu or any other man who

bathes with sacred ash or has applied sacred ash, excels in his acts.

Śrī Rāma said:

150. Tell me all that: First (tell me) the importance of the sacred ash; (tell me) how it prolongs life and how it is preserved.

Śambhu said:

151-152a. It is the cause of increasing (the span of) life in the three kinds of men. (Merely) by touch it destroys sins, so also cold and hot, and it gives Śiva's position. In this matter I shall tell you an ancient account.

152b-156. There was a brāhmaṇa named Dhanañjaya belonging to Vasiṣṭha's family. He had a hundred wives endowed with form and beauty. One of them, Śāmākā, gave birth to (a son named) Karuṇa, O Sage. O Rāma, he had (a large number of) ascetic sons according to the number of wives. The father made an unequal distribution (of wealth) among them. Then there was a great enmity among the brothers. It is universal that men of the same stock have enmity (among themselves). Then (once) this Karuṇa along with hosts of sages went to the bank of Bhavanāśinī to see Narasiṁha.

157-162a. A certain brāhmaṇa had brought an excellent lovely fragrant fruit for (offering it after) seeing Nṛsiṁha. Karuṇa took that excellent fruit and smelt it. The hosts of brāhmaṇas (that were present) there joined him with a curse (i.e. cursed him): "O you of a sinful mind, from now onwards be a bee for a hundred years. The end of your curse will be (done) by the magnanimous Dadhīci." Then, he who had become a bee, said to his wife: "O auspicious one, I am turned into a bee. (Please) look after me." Saying so, and being like that (i.e. a bee) he wandered here and there. Then his kinsmen of a sinful resolve, having come to know him to be like this (i.e. to be turned into a bee), having attempted to kill him, threw him into oil.

162b-167. Taking (i.e. finding) her husband to be dead, the woman of a slim waist was afflicted. To appease her grief goddess Arundhatī said: "O you of a bright smile, I shall bring him

back to life with sacred ash only." Then she gave Arundhatī the sacred ash from the sacred fire. She threw it on the dead being (the dead man) with the Mṛtyuñjaya hymn. Then the woman of a bright smile fanned (her dead husband) gently with a fan. Then due to the power of the sacred ash, the being (i.e. the man) got up. Then when a hundred years were over, a kinsman killed (him). When the husband died, that chaste woman of a bright smile was afflicted. The chaste woman sought the refuge of Dadhīca, the best brāhmaṇa and a sage, a great devotee of the great lord (Śiva). The brāhmaṇa, a treasure of penance, said (to her):

168-171. Bhasma (i.e. the sacred ash) alone brought back to life Jamadagni, a treasure of penance, who was bereft of life (i.e. who was dead); so also Kaśyapa who was like that (i.e. who was dead); so also (it brought back to life) gods, (other) beings, and even me in olden times. Therefore, O sinless one, with the sacred ash only I shall bring back to life your being (i.e. your husband)." Saying so the venerable Dadhīca sought the succour of the great lord (i.e. Śiva). Taking the sacred ash in his hand and consecrating it with a hymn, he brought back to life the husband of that very chaste woman. At the touch of the hand of the great lord, Karuṇa became free from the curse. Going to (i.e. regaining) his original form, he went to his own hermitage.

172-174a. The chaste woman invited Dadhīca to her house for food; she solicited the brāhmaṇa sage (to take food); and then the brāhmaṇa ate (food). When the best brāhmaṇa had eaten food, a crore of (his) disciples came (there); so also gods with their bodies smeared with the sacred ash came (there). Having saluted Dadhīca, they approached him with a desire (to know) Śiva.

The gods said:

174b-178a. O you highly intelligent one, formerly our knowledge had disappeared. Seeing Gautama's wife we were affected by love. We outraged her who had gone through the auspicious rite of marriage. The knowledge of us who longed for her, perished. Then, all of us (turned into) ghosts went to the sage Durvāsas. He said: "Now (only) I shall remove the entire sin of you by

means of the Śatarudriya hymn, consecrated by Śambhu (i.e. Śiva) himself. He also gave it to me for appeasing (the sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa etc."

178b-180. Saying so, Durvāsas gave the excellent bhasma (the sacred ash) to us. Then, all of us, whose minds were perverted, became at that moment only free from sins after our bodies were smeared with the sacred ash to the accompaniment of the Śatarudriya hymn. This is a wonder. We know the power of bhasma to be like this.

Dadhīca said:

181-185a. I shall tell you in brief the power of the bhasma of (i.e. sacred to) Śiva. Even in hundreds of years it is not possible to tell it in detail. Now I shall tell you the old account of the two gods, Viṣṇu and Śaṁkara, (so also about) the destruction of (the sin due to) the murder of a brāhmaṇa. Formerly at the time of the deluge (of the creation) of Brahmā in an awful ocean, the great illustrious Viṣṇu lay in the water of (i.e. caused by) the deluge. Two hundred 'eggs of Brahmā' (i.e. worlds) reached his two sides. Twenty were by the side of his two feet, and twenty near his head. The lord held the 'egg of Brahmā' as a pearl (worn) on the nose.

185b-191. Certain excellent sages like Lomaśa, were practising great (i.e. severe) penance in the circle of (i.e. his round) navel. They were propitiating the great god. Then Viṣṇu of great lustre, with a desire to create (the world) thought; being intent upon profound meditation, he did not see anything. Due to great grief he repeatedly cried aloud. In the meanwhile, seeing an extraordinary lustre, Viṣṇu, through fear, closed his eyes. He (who possessed that extraordinary lustre), having a body, and lustrous like cow's milk, came there and collected the pair of the row of a crore of 'Brahmā's eggs' in his couple of hands; he held to his bosom the lustre produced by the crore of 'Brahmā's eggs'. One 'egg of Brahmā' (i.e. a world) jumped up and fell into his two hands. Not being able to see him, Viṣṇu (desiring) to see him, praised him, the immutable one, who was like that and who was (adorned) with all ornaments.

Viṣṇu said:

192-200a. Salutation to you, the god of gods; salutation to you the eternal and immutable one. I do not know you; (but) you know (me). My repeated salutations to you. I do not know your (true) state. Your lustre is difficult to look at. I seek the refuge of you who have put on emerald ear-rings, who are adorned with a row of golden necklaces, who have put on a jewelled ring, who are illustrious, who have put on ornaments on your arms and viscera, whose eyes are slightly red, bright and long (i.e. broad), who view (sharply) like an arrow, who have an (additional) eye on your forehead, who are immutable, whose eyebrows create the illusions of Cupid's bow, who are the lord, whose lovely nose is high, whose cheeks are spotless, whose smile is gentle, whose face is pleased, who are mighty, who appear (charming) like the young moon, who have put on the red garment of wisdom, who have devised the anklets of the Vedas. O mighty one, give me sight. Be the refuge of one that is doomed by ignorance and that is helpless, blind and pitiable.

Then he (i.e. Śambhu) gave him divine sight capable of seeing himself. Then Viṣṇu, seeing the three-eyed Śambhu standing before him, said (to him): "Who are you? I do not recognise you of a great glory. I am able only to salute you but not to recognise you."

Sadāśiva said:

200b-201a. I shall give you knowledge. Bathe in the ocean. After that have bath with (i.e. apply) sacred ash, and after that I shall give you knowledge.

The lord said:

201b-203a. Nowhere is there water fit for my bath.

Thus addressed, he with 'Brahmā's egg' touching his body, sat there. It was not proper for Viṣṇu to bathe in thigh-deep water. Śambhu laughed (and said): "Oh, there is too much water for (your) bath."

Dadhīca said:

203b-210a. Then god Śiva looked at Viṣṇu with the eye on his forehead; and looked at him whose subtle limbs had disappeared with his left eye. Then Viṣṇu, having a subtle and cold body was (thus) told by Śambhu: "O Viṣṇu, take a bath; this deep lake is fashioned". Then Viṣṇu was not able to enter that deep lake prepared on Śiva's lap for bathing. Viṣṇu said: "There is no way to get into the lake. O god, give me a way (to enter it)." Then Śambhu said to him: "O mighty one, formerly this large (quantity of) water was a crore yojanas deep. When you entered it, it has become thigh-deep. When you are (already) standing there, how do you say you have no entrance? In this deep lake of mine I see that this thigh (of you) is of the measure of eight fingers. Get in; I shall give a touch to (i.e. support) your feet. One sentence uttered by me is a staircase; it is Veda that has come out of my words."

Viṣṇu said:

210b-211a. Nobody here has the ability to climb up (the staircase of) words. It is possible to grasp a tangible object. How can the scriptures be grasped?

Śambhu said:

211b-214a. A man has no capacity to grasp or climb up objects. Accept this great Veda.

Then Hari too accepted it. He, with his hands bent due to lack of strength, was as it were falling. (Then) Viṣṇu said to Śiva: "It is not possible for me to hold it." Śiva laughed, as it were dropping into the great deep lake. (He said): "O Keśava, having gone up the staircase, please take a bath."

Dadhīca said:

214b-217. He (i.e. Viṣṇu), having duly bathed there (i.e. in the great deep lake) where the Veda had become the staircase and the water was thigh-deep, came out, and said: "I have bathed. What next is to be done?" Then Śambhu said to Viṣṇu: "Tell me whether you are thinking or not thinking of something in your mind." Hari said: "(I am) not (thinking of) anything."

Then Śambhu said to him: "Having purified yourself with the bath with (i.e. the application of) sacred ash, you will know the highest auspicious object; for that is recommended for one who is initiated. I would protect that."

Dadhīca said:

218-222. Then Śiva took (i.e. scratched) the sacred ash on his chest with his nail, consecrated it with Om and the Gāyatrī (hymn) of the form of Brahman, took it with (i.e. between) his fingers, and with (the accompaniment of the hymn of) five syllables he threw it on the head and all limbs of Viṣṇu. Gazing on him with tranquil eyes, Śiva said to Viṣṇu: "Live (long). Meditate on what there is in your heart." Then he was intent upon meditation. In his heart he saw a lamp of a long (i.e. big) shape and very bright. Viṣṇu said to Śiva: "I have actually seen a lamp." Śiva said: "O Viṣṇu, your knowledge is not mature. Eat the sacred ash. (Then) your knowledge will be complete."

Viṣṇu said:

223-233. I shall eat the sacred ash. Formerly I have bathed with (i.e. applied to my body) the sacred ash.

Seeing the lord, accessible through devotion (only), Viṣṇu ate the sacred ash. (Then) there was a great wonder: In a moment Viṣṇu became one having the lustre of a ripe bimba fruit and having the complexion of a pure pearl. Since then this Viṣṇu is pleased and is (of a) white (complexion). Then again he became engrossed in meditation, and in the lamp saw a man who was like a pure crystal, who was Śiva with three eyes and two hands, who gave a boon with the right hand and fearlessness with the left, whose body was like that (of a child) of five years, whose brilliance was like that of a myriad moons, whose ear-rings were made of emeralds, who was adorned with a row of necklaces, who was handsome due to a jewelled ring, who had put on ornaments on his arms and chest etc., whose lips were small and red, whose eyes were long and reached his ears, whose eyes were sharp like arrows, who had an eye on his forehead, who was immutable, whose eyebrows created the illusion

of Cupid's bow, who was the lord, whose lovely nose was high, whose cheeks were spotless, whose smile was gentle, whose face was pleased, who looked like the young moon, who was mighty, who had put on the red garment of wisdom, who had devised the anklets of the Vedas, who had put a jewelled Om in the left finger (i.e. finger of the left hand), and who was immutable. Then Viṣṇu became (i.e. looked upon himself as) blessed. Then Śambhu said: "O Viṣṇu, what did you see in your heart?" Viṣṇu said: "First I saw a man of gentle body." Saying so, Viṣṇu fell at the feet of Śiva.

Viṣṇu said:

234. I do not know the power of the sacred ash, or whence can I know your prowess? Salutation to you, salutation to you. I seek your refuge.

Śiva said:

235. O illustrious one, ask for a boon which you desire with (i.e. have in) your mind.

Having then heard the words of Śiva, Viṣṇu chose an excellent boon.

Viṣṇu said:

236-239. O Śambhu, let me always have devotion for the couple of your feet.

Then having granted the boon Śambhu said these (words) to Viṣṇu: "Being happy with the application of the sacred ash, you will be my devotee."

Dadhīca said:

Thus I have told you from the beginning the great knowledge due to (the application of) the sacred ash. Therefore, O you all gods, apply sacred ash carefully.

The gods had their eyes dilated due to wonder (and said:) "Let it be so." He who every day listens to this meritorious, excellent account, is freed from all sins, and goes to the position of Śaṁkara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIX

A Sinful Brāhmaṇa Becomes an Attendant of Vīrabhadra

Śucismitā said:

1. O great sage, the eating of the sacred ash is seen to prolong life. It is capable of giving a course of the other world.

Dadhīca said:

2-8. In this matter I shall tell you an old and well-known account of what happened between Yama and Citragupta. Formerly a dog wandered through hunger in Mithilā. In a hundredth previous existence he was a brāhmaṇa of sinful resolves. In his youth he was a very intelligent (man) who was endowed with the (knowledge) of Vedas and sacred texts. Having gone to Gaṅgā for bathing, he bathed (in Gaṅgā) and having worshipped his dead ancestors, gods and sages also, went to the city (called) Prāttalikā. He took shelter in a brāhmaṇa's house. There was staying a daughter of a kṣatriya. She was young. Her lover was killed. She had lost her kingdom. She possessed wealth of six crores of niṣkas. At night, after moon-light, she came near the brāhmaṇa who was asleep and was handsome in all limbs, and seeing him said these words: "O brāhmaṇa, wherefrom have you come? To which country will you go?"

The brāhmaṇa said:

9. Stirring (out) at a wrong time would certainly create suspicion (in the minds) of all; so also the talk between us who are young in this private, mirthful chamber.

The kṣatriya woman said:

10-11. A talk in private (between a young man and a young woman) is not censurable when a tale is told, on a pilgrimage, at a sacred place, at the time of the devastation of the country etc., at the time of a famine, or when the village is on fire. You yourself first took shelter in my house. I am (just) staying in this house. (Therefore) nobody will have a suspicion in this matter.

The brāhmaṇa said:

12-17. I have to keep mum. Quickly go from my presence.

Thus addressed by the brāhmaṇa she thus thought to herself: 'Somehow or other I should have union with him. I shall (now) weep so that he will come to console me. When he will come to console me, he will raise me up. Then I shall get up and have contact of his neck with my creeper-like arms (i.e. I shall throw my creeper-like arms round his neck); and as it were fainting, I shall touch his body with the pair of my breasts. Seeing me having lost consciousness, he, the best brāhmaṇa who would be seated, will put my body on his lap. I, as it were being unconscious, will throw off my garment, and as it were weeping (i.e. pretending to weep), shall show him that (private) part (of me) which is very lovely, which is free from hair, which has the shape of a ripe aśvattha-leaf, which is the very fragrant abode of Cupid.

18-22. Having, while rolling on his body, removed his garment, I shall make his mind perplexed and bring the brāhmaṇa under my control. His mind would not be (as perturbed) when (my private part) is not seen as it would be (perturbed) when it is seen. The mind is not so (much perturbed) in (i.e. due to) talk as it is by means of actual seeing (the private part). The mind is not (perturbed) like that in a mirthful talk as it is in (i.e. by means of) a dialogue. The mind is not so (much perturbed) by means of a touch as it is in (i.e. due to) a mirthful talk. (The mind is) not so (much perturbed) by touching the vulva as by seeing it. Whose mind does not become excited and whose semen does not trickle down on seeing a woman's armpits, her pair of breasts and her vulva being touched (by herself)?'

Dadhīca said:

23-28. Thinking like this with (i.e. in) her mind, that kṣatriya woman went to her house; and having approached the door of her house, she wept gently. She wept for a long time. 'Removing the grief of a woman, a child, an old man, a feeble person, a king, a meditating saint due to poison, fire, water or the fall of a stone etc. is recommended; they say it is like giving a well.' Thinking like this that brāhmana, the treasure of kindness, being

pure and with his mind pleased, went near her, and then the brāhmaṇa said to her: "Enough of (i.e. desist from) this great grief going against (happiness in) this and the next world. This leads to the drying up of the body and harms the mind also. O you young woman, give up this grief. It is no use grieving. What is the cause of your wailing; what is it for which you are weeping?"

Dadhīca said:

29-35a. Thus addressed by that brāhmaṇa, she did not say anything. She fell on the ground as if she had fainted; and looked at him (and showed) as it were she did not see him. The brāhmaṇa, knowing the highest truth, made her get up. When he made her get up, she got up but again and again fell down. The brāhmaṇa sat down and again and again got her up who had repeatedly fallen down, put her on his lap, and wiped her eyes. Then as it were she had fainted, she removed her garment, and showed him her breasts, her private part, her arm-pits and eyes. Having hung to his neck with her arms, she touched the brāhmaṇa with her breasts. The moonlight was clear, and there were gentle breezes. Then the brāhmaṇa became engrossed in thinking: 'This is not my work. It is proper for the father, the mother, the husband or the teacher. To me who am not enlightened, everything appears inauspicious.'

35b-40a. Then Cupid came there when the two were in private. Cupid, of a bad heart, struck the brāhmaṇa with sharp arrows. The brāhmaṇa, being afflicted due to the arrows of Cupid, became lustful, and thought: 'This one, very beautiful in all limbs, appears to be lustful. Otherwise how can there be horripilation on her vulva? All that will be clear from the touch of her breasts.' Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa touched her breasts and vulva. She too, who feigned a swoon, had a smile on her face. She closely embraced the brāhmaṇa, and kissed his face. Then they were united even for a hundred years.

40b-42. When a hundred years had passed, the brāhmaṇa one day in the morning went to a river to bathe. She too went with the brāhmaṇa. He bathed there and listened to the Kaurma Purāṇa which destroys all sins and gives (i.e. produces) devotion

to Śiva; and heard this verse uttered by the one who knew the Purāṇa.

43-45a. "He who kills a brāhmaṇa, he who drinks liquor, a thief, he who violates his teacher's wife, becomes free from the sin by just listening to the Kaurma Purāṇa." Hearing this statement, the brāhmaṇa said to that brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Purāṇas: "The sins committed by me have no number (i.e. cannot be counted). Tell me that which would destroy the heap of all (my) sins."

The brāhmaṇa well-versed in the Purāṇas said:

45b-47. Propitiate Śaṅkara, the god of gods, the lord of gods. O brāhmaṇa, by means of his worship all your (sin) will perish. Sin is said to be darkness. It perishes by means of the lamp of knowledge, or O brāhmaṇa, all sins perish due to the worship of him. Those who are bereft of knowledge and worship certainly fall into a hell.

Dadhīca said:

48-51a. Then the brāhmaṇa went to an excellent temple of Śiva. (There) he worshipped Śaṅkara with a thousand droṇa flowers. Then he went home and took food. Leaving the kṣatriya woman the brāhmaṇa went to the desired region. Having procured food to be eaten on days of fast, and having eaten it according to his capacity, he went to the temple of Śiva. Going there, he ate his meal with the ghee in the lamp outside the temple. Then he was under the sway of death, and went to Yama's world.

Yama said:

51b-57. Certain sins formerly committed by you have perished. O brāhmaṇa, since you offered worship to Śaṅkara on one day, a thousand of your sins have perished. Of the sins that have remained, the fruit is a fall into hell, (and staying there) for two crores of years, and having the existence of a dog a hundred times. Due to stealing the ghee from the lamp of Śiva a man has to resort to (i.e. to live in) hell for a hundred very awful years. He turns into wood in the Kumbhīpāka hell, and repeatedly becoming ash for ten years,

he then becomes an insect for another ten (years). Then for ten years he becomes the wick of a lamp. Sinking in and coming up from phlegm, impure feces, and pools of urine and semen, he eats phlegm, feces and dirt. Then when the residence in hell is over, he gets a hundred existences as a dog.

58-62. Hearing these words of Yama, the brāhmaṇa fell down. Then his dear wife became full of anxiety. In the meanwhile, Nārada came near her. She who was extremely afflicted, fell at the feet of Nārada. Having raised her, Nārada said to the pure one about her dead (husband): "O innocent one of large eyes, please go to your husband. O you of large eyes, your husband, abandoned by his kinsmen, is dead. O auspicious one, you should not weep. Enter fire (i.e. funeral pyre of your husband)."

The brāhmaṇa woman said:

O sage, tell me whether I should or should not go, so that the time for entering the fire should not elapse.

Nārada said:

63. That city is at a distance of a hundred yojanas from here. The brāhmaṇa (i.e. the body of your husband) will be burnt tomorrow.

Avyayā said:

64-69a. O sage, I deserve to go to the lord of my body, who is away.

Hearing her words, Nārada said to her: "You sit upon the handle of my lute. I shall go (there) in a moment." Saying so, he made haste and went there—to the country and abode of the dead brāhmaṇa. The sage said to that Avyayā: "If you will go to (i.e. desire to enter) fire there, then do not weep. O daughter, if you have committed a sin like enjoying another man (than your husband) then make an expiation to purify that. On entering into the fire your minor sins will perish. Leaving (i.e. except) entering the fire I do not see any other (expiation) for women for the appeasement of all sins."

Dadhīca said:

69b-70a. Impelled by Nārada's words, she said: "O great sage, what have women to do at the time of entering fire?"

Nārada said:

70b-75a. They have to bathe, sanctify themselves, have to put on ornaments and apply unguents, have to apply sandal (-paste), have to put on flowers, have to have incense, turmeric and sacred rice grains. They have to wear an auspicious thread and apply red lac to their feet. They should give gifts according to their capacity, they should speak agreeable words, and should have a pleasing face. They should listen to (the sound of) many auspicious musical instruments and songs. When a sin of (the nature of) infidelity is committed, then, with reference to that old sin (i.e. sin committed previously), that is said to be an expiation for the appeasement of that sin. Then she should put on the ornaments and offer them to a brāhmaṇa. In the absence of (such) ornaments, she should not make (the brāhmaṇa) perform the (rite of) expiation. In no other way, and nowhere, can that sin perish.

Avyayā said:

75b-76a. I shall do all this; (but) I do not have turmeric. What are the ornaments? O brāhmaṇa, give all that to me.

Nārada said:

76b. There is no such article of the auspicious state of wifehood as is required.

Dadhīca said:

77-78a. Then in a moment he (i.e. Nārada) went to Śiva's abode, Kailāsa. Seeing Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) he saluted her and said to her: "O mother, give me turmeric, ornaments and an auspicious thread."

Pārvatī said:

78b-79a. How should I give any ornament to a widow? If I give (her an ornament), widowhood is not possible.

Nārada said:

79b-80a. O mother, a woman is not a widow as long as her husband's body remains (unburnt). Till the husband's body is burnt, there is no impurity and the auspicious state of wifehood remains.

Pārvatī said:

80b-83. No other body (than mine) deserves to put on my ornaments and turmeric. When ornaments etc. are given by me, long life is prescribed. Whatever you have said would be given by (my maid) Jayantī.

Then he went to Jayantī and carried whatever was given by her. Then the sage gave turmeric to Avyayā who was being given a bath. Then the sage gave her fine garments and ornaments. He said to her: "Who will perform your funeral rites? Appoint him."

Avyayā said:

84. O sage, you alone are the cause of (i.e. will perform) all rites in my case. You are my father. Perform every (rite); salutation to you, O best sage.

Dadhīca said:

85-90. Then having burnt (i.e. consigned to fire the body of) the brāhmaṇa, Nārada said to her: "O Avyayā, go, and enter the fire if you so desire." Then the chaste lady decorated (herself), and having saluted Nārada after going round him three times keeping him to her right, dedicated her mind to Gaurī (i.e. Pārvatī). Desiring to please Pārvatī, she separately (i.e. one by one) touched her very fine auspicious thread, turmeric, so also sacred grains and flowers, garments, musk, sandal, golden comb, various fruits, from presents to her garments—gave all (these) to elderly married women. The chaste woman went three times round the fire which was, as it were, burning the sky with rows of flames, by keeping it to her right, and stood in front of it. Then with the palms of her hands folded and with a smiling face she said these words:

Avyayā said:

91-98. O regents of the quarters like Indra, O mother Earth, O Sun, O all gods like Dharma (i.e. Yama), hear my words: "If, from (the day of) marriage till today I have, day and night, devoutly served my husband by words, thought, and by acts, and if in the three states (of youth, adulthood and old age) I have not transgressed (in my duties to him), then truly grant me going with my husband."

Saying so, she quickly dropped the flower from the tip of her hand (and) entered the blazing fire. Then she saw an aeroplane, which was excellent like the Sun and graced with the music of celestial nymphs. She got into the aeroplane and went to heaven with her husband. Then Yama, having honoured that chaste wife, said to her: "You will have (i.e. live in) heaven eternally; (now) no sin of you remains. In hell your sin was washed off (by staying there) for two crore years. There is no doubt about it. But (still) there is a sin. One is committed by eating the ghee of the lamp (kept in honour) of Śiva. There may not be a fall into hell, but will be hundred existences as a dog."

Avyayā said:

99. How can there be (a fall into) hell for those who are purified by entering fire? The destruction of all sins would take place by entering into fire.

Yama said:

100-106. Formerly Śambhu had said that the sin of him who steals (the articles) of Śiva, never perishes. Other sins may perish. Then he obtains the existence of a dog, which would be (continuing) for a hundred years after that.

Reaching the abode of Dadhīca he has entered the mouth of death. Near his wall there was the sacred ash that was consecrated. The dog fell into the sacred ash, died, and went to Yama. Yama honoured him, bowed down to him (and said): "You are the most meritorious sage. There is no proper place for you in my house. (Please) go out." Then that dog, impelled by Yama, went out and

remained there. Nārada saw him who remained there with tormentation; and he asked him: "Why do you, the bright one, remain here? O you of high intelligence, I know you to be a devotee of Śiva, who died remaining in the ash of (i.e. sacred to) Śiva. There is no residence in Yama's world for them who are devotees of Śiva (but) who being sinful, cast their bodies. This is Śiva's order given by Śiva."

Dadhīca said:

107-112. Speaking thus to the dog, the sage went to Kailāsa. Having saluted Śiva (by prostrating himself) like a staff, he respectfully said to him: "O god, a certain dog (having come) from Yama's city remains outside. He is dead in the sacred ash. Therefore, he deserves (residence in) your heaven." Then Vīrabhadra, the chief among the attendants, being impelled by Śiva, brought that dog having a divine form and having saluted the feet of Śiva. Then he respectfully said to the god. The attendant of Śiva (i.e. Vīrabhadra) said to the god: "Make him an attendant (i.e. one of the attendants) of me." Śiva said: "All right." The attendant became one with a dog's face (i.e. the dog became one of the attendants).

Dadhīca said:

O you Śucismitā, the importance of the sacred ash is matchless. O you of a good vow, what more than this do you wish to hear?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVEN

Vīrabhadra's Heroic Deed

Śucismitā said:

1. O brāhmaṇa, O sage, tell me how formerly the sacred ash protected Kaśyapa, Jamadagni of the gods?

Dadhīca said:

2-6. Formerly gods accompanied by Kaśyapa and others went to a well-known mountain named Śokara. In the middle of the mountain was a very beautiful (forest) which was full of many birds, which was resorted to by various hosts of sages, which was the resort of Vāsudeva, which was charming, which was resorted to by bevies of celestial nymphs, which was crowded with strange trees, which was bright with flowers of all seasons. We and others entered the best mountain (forest) like that and praising Viṣṇu went there to lord Śiva. We saw a great flame there and we entered it. Excepting me that deity (i.e. that flame) burnt (other) sages. After that it (also) burnt me. O auspicious one, we were reduced to ash.

7-14. Seeing us like this, that brave Vīrabhadra went to that mountain for some reason. With his entire body smeared with sacred ash, he remaining at the top, auspicious and pure, all alone, desireless and tranquil, heard the sound of wailing. Then he was full of thought: 'The sound of the bodies of dead men and the smell as it were of dead bodies, are being perceived.' Deciding like this in his mind, he went to the fire of great brilliance. Then that fire also started to burn Vīrabhadra. But it went out as the fire of (i.e. burning) grass (i.e. hay) would go out on receiving (i.e. being sprinkled over with) water. Then Vīrabhadra saw a great, mighty flame, which went (up) to the sky even (like) flame falling (i.e. dropped by) Śiva (obscure!). The brave Vīrabhadra thought in his mind: '(This) flame is the destroyer of hundreds of crores of beings. So for the protection of all I desire to drink it. As a thirsty man drinks water, I shall consume this great flame.' In the meanwhile a divine voice said to (Vīrabhadra) the hero.

The voice said:

15-17. O hero, do not do a rash act. Where is your thirst, and where is the fire? (i.e. What a great disparity is there between the two!). Those that are thirsty are interested in water. Opposite is (their attitude towards) a wild fire. The lord of demons, viz. Praṇaṣṭa had a large head extending over a yojana. There was another (demon) whose face extended over a hundred yojanas

and who had a hundred arms. The illustrious Agastya had completely drunk (the water of) the ocean. This flame destroyed these and other well-known (beings).

Vīrabhadra said:

18-19a. This flame will not cause fear as told by you. O Sarasvatī, I shall be angry with you. Know me to be Vīrabhadra whose position is honoured by all gods.

Bhāratī said:

19b-22a. O sage, what I said was with an affectionate feeling, and not through hatred or any other feeling. O hero, give up your anger and do what is beneficial for yourself.

Saying so the goddess vanished through the fear of the hero. Then that hero easily drank (i.e. consumed) the great flame.

22b-26a. In a moment Vīrabhadra all alone drank that great flame which extended over a hundred yojanas and was extremely difficult to bear. Just on seeing the heaps of ashes (of the bodies) of (gods) led by Indra and of sages, the magnanimous Vīrabhadra called them (out). Those dead sages and residents of heaven (i.e. gods) did not respond. Knowing the destruction of the sages and gods, Vīrabhadra thought: 'How can I, (though) an experienced one, bring all of them back to life?' Through meditation he knew (how to bring them back to) life. Sipping (water) he consecrated with the hallowed Mṛtyuñjaya hymn and with sacred ash the ashes (of the bodies) of the dead.

26b-28a. Then the best sages, having resorted to their respective bodies, got up. Then they went to the very bright side of the mountain. There also they were swallowed by a serpent of a mighty body. Then the mighty hero (Vīrabhadra) went to the great serpent.

28b-33a. Seeing Vīrabhadra to have come (there), the serpent started fighting. The serpent, taking up various forms, fought for a year. Then the hero holding with both his hands, the two lips (of the serpent), tore his entire body into two (parts). Seeing the gods dead, Śaṅkara brought them back to life with the sacred ash only. Then the gods, along with the sages, saluted Vīrabhadra and went their way. (Then) they saw the

demon Pañcameḍhra who had come there, had a large body, was endowed with ten arms, possessed five feet, had eight heads, and desired a large (quantity of) food.

33b-38. That demon, when he had fought with the monkey Vālin, who had certainly double the strength of Viṣṇu, having the body of a large boar, had suddenly struck Vālin with his five feet in boxing, and had proceeded to kill Sugrīva with his hands. He put Sugrīva into his mouth and swallowed him like a morsel. Seeing Vālin and Sugrīva swallowed, he thought: 'How shall I kill him and how shall I save the monkey?' When he was thinking like this the lord of demons ate up the monkey with one effort. Seeing the demon like that, all the gods and sages became intent on running (away).

39-44. Seeing them running, that demon Pañcameḍhra took all of them with all his hands and ate them up. Then Vīrabhadra, seeing the monkeys, sages and gods being eaten up (by the demon) angrily took in his hand a rock extending over fifty yojanas and struck it on the heads (of the demon). The middle head (of the demon) fell down. Then taking the peak of the mountain which was a hundred yojanas long and holding it more firmly, he struck the lord of mountains. Then the demon said to that three-eyed Vīrabhadra: "(Now) see the strength of my arms. I have seen your might. There is a couple of swords. They are glistening with oil, and they are fifty yojanas high (i.e. long). They extend over a yojana, are very strong, and have (good) characteristics. You take one liked by you. The one that remains is dear to me."

45-49. Saying, "All right", the very strong Vīrabhadra took one sword; and he moved the sharp sword with his hand; and then roared angrily. The best demon also took a sword and roared in the same way. Having approached Vīrabhadra, he put it on his neck (i.e. struck on his neck with it). The limb (i.e. the neck) was pierced, and profuse blood flowed out. With one hand the demon then drank the blood. Vīrabhadra angrily struck the demon on the region of his neck. He took the two heads that were cut off and that were falling down. The magnanimous one swallowed them, and roared like a lion. Due to that great roar the three worlds were agitated.

50-55. With their bodies pierced by strokes of swords made by each other, they who were roaring and who were wet with blood, appeared like the blossomed kiṁśuka (trees). The god (Vīrabhadra) and the demon (Pañcameḍhra) with swords (in their hands) fought for a year. After that they fought a mace-fight for a year. Then a battle with knives took place (between the two) for a year. Then again taking two swords, they fought with each other. Then the lord of (Śiva's) attendants, of the nature of a tusk, saying, 'Prosperity (to you)', and with his eyes red with anger, moved a great sword before him, and cut off his entire forest-like neck, as (one would cut off) a plantain tree. Taking all the heads, he ate them up. Having torn his body with his nails, he took out and saw the deities, the lordly monkeys (i.e. Vālin and Sugrīva) and the great goddess.

56-63. Seeing this very fierce battle, Nārada went and told Brahmā, Vāsudeva and Śaṅkara (about it): "The sages, the deities, the two monkeys Vālin and Sugrīva have been protected by him; and he, of the nature of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva has brought the two (monkeys) back to life." An awful boon was given by Śiva to a demon. There was a mighty demon in the kingdom of Hiraṇyakaśipu. He wonderfully fought for a hundred years with the gods. Many fled in various ways, and hundreds of demons died. He, thinking like this, was protected by his preceptor, Śukra: "O Śukra, I died a hundred times, and was brought back to life by you only. Make me immortal, and make him who is in my belly mortal (i.e. let me be immortal, and let those eaten by me die). Otherwise, I shall die; there is no doubt about it. O preceptor, I had a very terrible fight with Yama. In the battle, that valorous king Yama was swallowed up by me. He entered my belly, pierced it and roared. I then died, but was again brought back to life by you. Therefore, I shall practise penance for the death of those who are in my belly."

Śukra said:

64-65a. This is so. There is no doubt about it. You practise it duly. There is a holy place (called) Syamantapañcaka. Please go there.

The demon said:

65b-74. I shall practise a very terrible (i.e. severe) penace, (like) which was not practised by gods and demons. I shall bind with iron fetters my feet at the end, i.e. at the ankles. I shall fashion a couple of iron-pillars having iron-straps. I shall bind (i.e. keep tied) my feet in the strap and put my head below (and feet above); similarly I shall keep my mouth open, and make my face (let) down. I shall remain with a flame fluttering in a circular way and will keep my eyes open. I shall practise penance like this, whosoever may be the giver of the boon. Let Brahmā or Śaṅkara or Viṣṇu be the giver of the boon, whosoever may grant it.

Having thus spoken to his preceptor Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), he practised the penance for five or six months and again practised another penance. Having cut off his head with his nails, he offered it, with (the accompaniment of) a hymn, into the fire. He offered his four heads, with (the utterance of) the hymn, 'Salutaion to Bhadra'. When the demon was trying to abandon (i.e. to offer) his fifth head, the revered lord of Ambikā (i.e. Śiva) stood up from the fire. He resembled a pure crystal and was adorned with the young moon. The great god said to the demon who had bent down his head: "O demon, do not do a rash act. I am the giver of a boon. Ask for a boon."

The demon said:

75-81a. You, the great god, are the giver of many boons. Let my heads that are struck off grow again and let the beings swallowed by me die. Let me have four times the power of Viṣṇu, having the body of the Boar. You may never be angry with me and be always near me. A man would come up when your matted hair is pulled out. Let me die at his hands; and not (be killed) by others. This is what I ask for.

"It shall be just so". Saying like this Śiva disappeared. (Bhāratī said:) "You have killed the sinful demon who had received such a boon." Then having embraced the hero (Vīrabhadra), Viṣṇu, Śiva and the grandsire (i.e. Brahmā) went as they had come. The wives of deities etc. fell (i.e. prostrated before him)

on the ground like a staff and said to Vīrabhadra: "Salutation to you, O lord of the god of gods; salutation to you, O eternal and endless one; salutation to you; be the giver of boons."

Vīrabhadra said:

81b-86. By means of the sacred ash I shall bring back to life the gods along with the sages and the monkeys. You should be pleased; now you should not grieve.

Saying so, Vīrabhadra brought them back to life with the sacred ash. The sages and the gods, so also the two monkeys (i.e. Vālin and Sugrīva) got up. With the palms of their hands put to their heads, they who were pleased, saluted him, and said: "O dear one, you have brought (us) back to life; you are our spiritual father. O you born of Śaṁkara, always be our refuge. Punish the children on seeing their bad behaviour; so also protect them as your own sons from the torment inflicted by the enemies and from diseases. O you sinless one, you punished those who had committed sins at the sacrifice of Dakṣa. O father, we are now (to be protected by you) like children."

Vīrabhadra said:

87-92. This is true. There is no doubt about it. Remember me when you are troubled. The trouble will quickly perish. The troubles from demons to those who recite the name of Vīrabhadra a hundred and eight times, beginning with 'Om' and ending with (the word) 'salutation', with (i.e. using) the dative (as Vīrabhadrāya), will come to an end. At the time of trouble from brāhmaṇa-ghosts and fear from goblins etc. all the troubles vanish (merely) by remembering the name (of Vīrabhadra). (One should remember him) whose eyes are like the brilliance of lightning, who is the lord, whose lips are tawny and shining with fangs resembling the young moon, whose body is very dark, who has the garland of matted hair, and who has on his body three lines of sacred ash. This recollection (of Vīrabhadra) is told for (getting) freedom from brāhmaṇa-ghosts. All this is explained in the hymn of Vīrabhadra.

Dadhīca said:

93-95. The hero accomplished (like this). So also the sages and gods that had come. By these three the great importance of the sacred ash is proclaimed. Of him who recites or listens to it, it destroys the sins, gives devotion to Śiva, and prolongs life and good health.

Śucismitā said:

I am happy; I am blessed; I am best among women. My sins are destroyed. My salutation to you, O best sage.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED EIGHT

How to Prepare Sacred Ash

Śrī Rāma said:

1. O illustrious one, tell about the origin of the sacred ash, the greatness of the sacred ash, and the religious merit (earned) through the application of the sacred ash.

Śambhu said:

2-8a. O Rāma, I shall tell you about the origin of the sacred ash. (I shall tell you about its effect) by (just) remembering or telling about it. O king, listen to it. He who is that eternal god Sadāśiva, who is saluted by Brahmā, who has three eyes, who is the prop of virtues, who is beyond qualities, who is unchangeable and immutable, had once a desire to create on seeing the three qualities in himself—this triad of qualities should be known as the three Vedas. O dear one, having divided himself and the region there, he created on his right side the son, viz. Brahmā and Hari from his left side. At the back side he created Maheśāna (i.e. Śiva); thus the mighty one created three sons. As soon as they were born they became the three gods—Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva. They distinctly spoke these words: "Who are you? Who are we?" To those sons Śiva

said: "You are the sons, (and) I am your father. O sons, resort to these three qualities which are the cause of (all) acts."

The sons said:

8b-16. O lord, who should resort to which quality and how long? How can there be the cessation from the qualities? Tell this to us.

Śiva said:

As long as you have (i.e. retain your) knowledge or as long as you live, each one of these qualities should be retained by you. Brahmā should retain the quality of Sattva (i.e. goodness), Viṣṇu should retain Rajas (i.e. activity) and Maheśvara (should keep) Tamas (i.e. ignorance or darkness).

As soon as the lord of gods had said this, Brahmā took up Sattva. He could not move it; then how could he be capable of holding it? Abandoning that quality, he took up the quality of Rajas. He was not able to move it; (so) he took up the Tamas quality. He was not able to move it. He fell down and wept; and Viṣṇu held the Rajas quality with his left hand. (Then) Maheśa held the Tamas quality with his two fingers; one, i.e. Viṣṇu, with his two fingers, took up the Sattva (quality). He sustained Brahmā at the footstool, and danced. The giver of the boons, having seen Śiva who was dancing, who had a graceful form, whose form was (fair) like the cow's milk, who was young and had three eyes, who held everything, who caused joy, said to his sons:

Śivā said:

17-18. O son, I am pleased (with you). Ask for a boon as desired (by you).

Then the son said to the father: "Give this boon to me: O auspicious one, let the worship intended for me be yours. You should always remain in me; you, the immutable one, are me only."

Śiva said:

19-20. O magnanimous one, this will happen; there is no doubt. These two reddish and fair, Brahmā and Viṣṇu are my

two sons. They are the fine soft hair of the armpits, they have my form and are innocent.

Then he said to Brahmā: "You resort to (i.e. take) this one quality."

Brahmā said:

21-22a. O lord, I am not able to hold the quality indicated by you. O god, I shall sustain the Rajas (quality); let Hari resort to the Sattva (quality). This god will hold the remaining quality.

Śambhu said:

22b-24. After having taken the qualities, those gods were not able always to hold them. For being able to sustain (them) they again said to Śiva (i.e. the lord): "We are not able to hold these qualities for all the time. O lord if you are the giver of boons, (then) give us the capacity (to hold them)." Then hearing their words, Śiva said (these) words.

Śiva said:

25-28. Of all (powers), the power of knowledge (alone) is called power. Vidyā (i.e. knowledge) resorts to the three qualities. Ignorance also resorts to them. Please hold the essence of the three qualities after burning them. You should hold that what would be (remaining) there.

Then his son said (these) words: "There cannot be burning without fire." Śiva said: "Fire certainly exists in the eye of Śaṅkara. These three qualities are the cow; and knowledge would be (i.e. is) the auspicious cowdung. Upaniṣad is said to be the urine (of the cow). Then one should prepare the sacred ash from them.

29-30a. One should consecrate the cow; the dung of her whose calves are dead, with the hymn *Āgāvaḥ*. (Uttering the hymn) one should make the cow eat the grass and drink the water with the hymn *Gāvo gāvo gāvaḥ*.

30b-34a. Or the one who observes the vow, should observe a fast on the fourteenth day of the bright and the dark fortnights. Then the next day one should get up in the morning and being

pure and composed and having bathed, having put on garments that are washed, should go to the cow for the dung. Having carefully got her up, one should get the urine from the cow. One should hold it in a pitcher made of gold, silver, copper or clay; or (one should hold it) in a blue lotus, or a vessel made of palāśa(-leaves) or in a horn. One should have the cow-urine and a little cowdung also. One should take in an excellent pot as told before, without letting it fall on the ground.

34b-35a. The wise one should purify the cowdung with the hymn *Śrīḥ me bhajatu* ('May prosperity resort to me'). With the hymn *Alakṣmīrmayi* ('Prosperity should not come to me'). one should purify the cowdung.

35b. With the hymn *Saṁ tvā siñcāmi* ('I sprinkle you'), he should put the cow-urine into the cowdung.

36-38a. With the hymn *Pañcānāṁ tvā* one should prepare fourteen piṇḍas. Having dried them with the rays of the sun, one should put the balls of the cowdung in the vessel already referred to. According to the rule in his own Gṛhya (Sūtra), he should install them and kindle fire. Then one should put balls (saying) 'to Arṇadeva'.

38b-39a. The wise one should perform the two rites called *Āghāra* (i.e. sprinkling clarified butter upon fire) and *Ājyabhāga* (offering two portions of clarified butter to Agni and Soma). Then he should make offerings to the lord of destruction. Then thirteen offerings like Jaya etc. should be made.

39b-42. Then five hymns like *Namo Hiraṇyabāhave* (should be recited). Thus having made all offerings ending with the fourth with the accompaniment of hymns, he should offer (an oblation) to Rudra, Śarva with the hymn *Yasya vai kaṅkati*. A wise man should offer with these the three that are known. Having made the Vyāhṛtis (i.e. uttering the words like Bhūr, Bhuvas etc.), he should offer the right sacrifice (to Agni). Then having withheld the remaining fuel, he should add other water to the water in the full vessel with the Yajus formula *Pūrṇam-āsānta.*

43-47a. He should sprinkle that water on his head with the hymn *Brāhmaṇeṣu amṛtam.* Then with the hymn *Prācyām* he should sprinkle the water in the directions. He should give a present to a brāhmaṇa. He should bring a ball of boiled rice.

With the hymn 'For the protection of the rite of all gods, I shall bring this to you, O fire; cover this one of mine today', he should cover the fire with that ball. The covering by it is said to be remaining in fire for three days. He should feed the brāhmaṇas, and being restrained in speech, should himself eat. If he desires more sacred ash, he should bring more cowdung.

47b-50a. After three days or one day, on the third or fourth day, he, having bathed in the morning, having put on white garments, having worn a white sacred thread, having put on white flowers and unguents, with his teeth (brushed) white, (his body) besmeared with the sacred ash, with the utterance of the hymn *Tad vā* should, indeed, not give up the sacred ash. Having offered presents, he should observe the sixteen formalities like invocation.

50b-55. Then he should collect the fire. With (the utterance of) the hymn *Agne, bhasma*, he should take the sacred ash produced (from the cowdung). Then, he should clean it with (the utterance of) the hymn *Agnirasmi* ('I am fire'), then mix it with the water of Gaṅgā or the milk of a cow. Then having powdered camphor, Kāśmīra-saffron, uśīra, sandal with agaru (a kind of sandal) well, he should drop that powder into the sacred ash with sacred hymn (i.e. syllable) *Om*. Then the hymn (that is said i.e. prescribed) at the time of sprinkling the milk is: 'O goddess, your sacred milk, giving intelligence, is nectar here (i.e. on the earth); due to your favour men are freed from all sins'. Then the learned one should invoke the small lumps of the sacred ash with the utterance of *Om*. With (the utterance of) the hymn, *Aṇoraṇīyān* the wise one (should do so).

Śambhu said:

56-61. Having thus procured the sacred ash and having taken it (in his hands), the knower of the hymns should clean it with *Om* and should get it hallowed with seven hymns. (He should apply it) to his head with (a hymn addressed) to Īśāna. (He should apply it) to his face with (the hymn) *Tat Puruṣa*. He should hallow the chest with the *Aghora* (hymn) and, the private parts with the *Vāma* (hymn), the feet with the *Sadyojāta* hymn, and the entire body with *Om*. Then he should dust

the entire body from the soles of his feet to his head (with sacred ash). Then he should sip water, and should put on a white, washed garment. Having sipped water again, he should do his rites fully. Then having taken the sacred ash and cleaned it with (the utterance of) *Om*, he should, recollecting (Śiva) the three-eyed one, the support of the three qualities, the creator of the three (Vedas) and the mighty one, with the hymn *Namaḥ Śivāya*, put the mark consisting of three lines on his forehead.

62-64a. Saying (the hymn) *Namaḥ Śivābhyām*, he should also put the mark consisting of three lines on both his arms. Saying (the hymn) *Aghorāya namaḥ* he should put (a similar mark) on both his forearms. Then (uttering the hymn) *Bhīmāya* he (should put the mark consisting of three lines) on his back, and the backside of his head. (Saying) 'salutation to Nīlakaṇṭha, the soul of all' he should put it on his head. Then having washed both his hands, he should perform (the proper) rites.

Śiva said:

64b-65a. Having, in this way, prepared and applied the sacred ash, you will be able to sustain the (three) qualities, and then create the beings.

Śambhu said:

65b-70. The gods Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśvara, thus addressed by (Śiva) did like that according to the (proper) rule, and vied with each other, being unable to recognise one another, they saluted and said to Śiva: "Who should sustain which quality?" Then Śiva said to his sons: "Due to the (particles of) dust the power of doing rites and knowledge also perish. Brahmā is seen to have a short life. He lives (longer) due to hymns. I was formerly decorated with the rows of 'Brahmā's eggs'. Having rested upon the Rajas quality, you are not recognising me.

71-78a. Viṣṇu has more power than Brahmā, and has also longer life than Brahmā in sustaining the row of 'Brahmā's eggs'. The life of Viṣṇu is said to be of the measure of four inhalings of Maheśa and me. May that Viṣṇu support you due to his having more of the Sattva (quality) than Brahmā (has). He knows me the entire time, and would not forget me. His only

worship is Sāttvikā, and neither Rājasī nor Tāmasī. Salutation to the Tranquil, Auspicious, of the Sattva quality; his possession of the Rajas quality is to be inferred. Salutation to Nīla, so the (Tamas) quality. Śambhu resorted to (it) like that. Formerly, he indeed possessed Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Therefore, worship of three kinds is laid down (in the case) of Śiva. Rajas, conjoined with Tamas is said to be awful. Śiva's worship, even more awful than that is regarded as giving a good course (i.e. salvation); and Rajas conjoined with Tamas is capable of propagating the sacred precepts. The worship even more interrupted than that is said to give fruit. Tamas mixed with Sattva promotes a mixture. A mixed worship of Śiva, causing the good of the world, is fruitless. This way or that way (but) worship of the lord should be regularly done. (The worship) of Śaṅkara in whatever way is said to give a quick fruit to a man."

Śambhu said:

78b-79. In brief this rule about the application of the sacred ash is told, O sinless one. It destroys all the sins of the speaker and the listeners.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED NINE

Jābāli Recommends Phallus Worship to the Brāhmaṇa Ikṣvāku

Śambhu said:

1-5a. In this regard I shall tell you a story which destroys sins and hearing which the pious one (i.e. Ikṣvāku) obtained excellent devotion. (There was) the best brāhmaṇa, Ikṣvāku by name. He was very learned, very intelligent, proficient in many sacred precepts and well-versed in the science of ethics. He did not perform a sacrifice; he did not give (in charity); he did not worship deities. He did not teach the Vedas, nor did he explain the sacred texts; so also (he did not teach) the Purāṇas, history, the sacred texts or the Vedas. With difficulty he could (get food to) eat and proceeded only with the

embellishment of his body. The life (of the span) of a lakh of years of that brāhmaṇa of that type passed.

5b-10. In the next (span of a) lakh, at night on the third day of the fifth month in (i.e. of) a year he heard this Purāṇa (text): "He, who has not given in charity the wealth earned by him, is certainly roasted for those many years in hell, (for the wealth) being enjoyed day-by-day would become (i.e. becomes) depleted. Then having gone through a thousand existences of insects etc., he then is (born) as a poor man suffering from diseases, having no relatives, having a wicked wife and many children. Every day he lives by begging and supplicating. He leads his life by asking for broken seeds (not capable of growing), or the life among servants (of a man) having no ears, no eyes and with dirt falling (from his body)."

11-13. Having heard the Purāṇa (text) like this, that Ikṣvāku became extremely afflicted. The mean brāhmaṇa repeatedly thought in his mind (like) this: 'Even Durgā, having flowers and beauty is void of fruit due to her having a buffalo. In the same way, knowledge without the Purāṇas would not show the (right) path. A man, (even) after studying many sacred texts, and Vedas with (all) their expanse, does not get proper knowledge unless he has studied the Puraṇas.'

Śambhu said:

14. When he was thinking like this he met with an untimely death. He then went to Yama's world, and was (thus) addressed by Yama.

Yama said:

15-19. You are having many sins. You have not secured great religious merit by teaching the Vedas. Sin (alone) is known to you. Therefore, O brāhmaṇa, you will remain in hell for a crore of years. You have a very short span of life. Go back to your former body (i.e. existence). O brāhmaṇa, do religious deeds that are beneficial like giving in charity, worshipping the deities, and repeating hymns; so also teach (Vedas) along with their limbs (i.e. the Vedāṅgas), and apply sacred ash. Worship God Viśveśvara, the god of gods and the lord of Umā. Merely by his perseverance you will not go to my world, O sinner, every day

listen to a little (i.e. small portion of) Purāṇa with respect. Then merely by listening to it, you will not see (i.e. experience) the pangs inflicted by Yama (i.e. me).

20-22. Hearing the words of Yama, the brāhmaṇa went back to (i.e. took up) his own (i.e. former) body. Then that brāhmaṇa made efforts to worship the lord. He went to the sage Jābāli, the worshipper of Śiva, who was endowed with penance and self-study, who discussed the sacred texts and the codes of law, who knew the truth about the Purāṇas, who was surrounded by a lakh of disciples, whose entire body had become loose due to old age, who had mastered the Vedas and the Vedāṅgas.

23-36. Desiring to see him he (i.e. Ikṣvāku) went to the Mandara (mountain) which had beautiful caves, which was crowded with many blossoming creepers full of various kinds of birds, which possesed flowers of all seasons, which was adorned with various fragrances, whose big caves were full of the songs (sung) by kinnara couples, the trees in which were resorted to by many beautiful, charming women, the lovely ones, suspending themselves from them, which was resounding with the (hummings of) bees made to rouse them who had slept due to the fatigue caused by love-sports, in which the cuckoos also cooed very much, indeed to unite the separated (lovers), which was crowded with hosts of various sages, where calm (i.e. undisturbed) deer were moving, which was crowded with the bevies of the celestial nymphs, which was resorted to by the groups of gandharvas, the interior of the forest of which was full of the songs produced from the mouths of many siddhas, which was full of lovely fruits, and which had many temples, which was thronged with hundreds of palaces, which had many houses, which was adorned with fierce and angry lords of attendants that had faces like those of lions, like those of elephants, like those of wolves, or having different or strange faces, (or) that had half faces, (or) had half-curved faces, (or) had faces like those of the female deer, (or that) had the faces like those of the creatures like the ruru deer, or like those of alligators, bears and monkeys, that had faces like those of tigers, scorpions, bears, camels, dogs and donkeys, that had faces like those of all the beings, that had faces like creepers, like trees, curved like

rocks and (made) of iron, that had superior bodies, faulty bodies, that had matted hair, that had tufts of hair on their heads, or that were clean-shaved, that had faces like those of birds, that had twelve faces, that had three-figured faces, that had faces like bells, that had faces, ears, or feet like winnowing baskets, that had face like bells or like flutes or like small bells, that had iron-faces like whatever (i.e. all) things in the world; (it was adorned with) certain (attendants) that had put down the charm and beauty of Cupid with their tender faces, that resembled a crore of suns, and that had lustre like those of a crore of moons, that had many colours, that had all (kinds of) faces, that had all forms and four faces, that hand two faces, five faces, three faces or even six faces, that had one or many faces, that were tranquil and were always happy.

37-44a. The mountain Mandara was resorted to by (beings) that were affluent with many enjoyments, and that resembled Rati and Cupid, that had faces like those of Lakṣmī and Viṣṇu, and had bodies like those of Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) and Śiva. It was also resorted to by others having various forms. There the cows were the Vedas, having the calves in the form of Mīmāṁsā; Dharma and others were bodily (present); Purāṇas (presented themselves) with (i.e. in) deeds; there were all the Codes of Law and (all) Histories; there were Vedas embodied; they stayed on the Mandara (mountain); the mountain destroyed sins. In its midst (i.e. on it, there was) a very auspicious and extremely beautiful city. It was decorated with wells, lakes, groves and hundreds of palaces. It had seven ramparts, trenches, and jewelled upper stories. It had nine town-gates, and beautiful houses. Its lustre is matchless, and it is without heat and cold. In it is an auspicious seat, beautified with the feet of Vedas.

44b-48a. The very beautiful foot-stool is prepared with all the Upaniṣads. To the two auspicious feet are (attached) Purāṇas and Vedas for auspiciousness. A great meditating saint is seated there. His figure is (fair) like cow's milk. His charming face has a gentle smile on it. The lord's age is sixteen years. On his chest he has a rosary made of gems and rudrākṣa. He having the lustre of a karṇikāra (flower) wears a sacred thread. The god has (put on) good, jewelled ear-rings. He has put on a crown and

golden garments. He has (put on) many ornaments, and has applied sandal of various kinds.

48b-54. On his left lap Pārvatī is seated, and he is looking at her face. The god embraces with his left arm the innocent, young goddess of a beautiful face adorned with fresh youth, decorated, beautiful in all limbs, and having a golden lotus, and raises her face with his right hand. With his left hand the god touches her head, and puts a mark (on it) with his right hand. With the fan of Oṁkāra Bhakti (i.e. Devotion) fans the gods. The charming Pūjā (i.e. worship) gives a garland with (i.e. of) flowers to the god. Jñapti (i.e. Cognition) and Virakti (i.e. Detachment)—the two ladies—hold the chowries in the form of abstract meditation. Samādhi (i.e. profound Meditation) works for him and Dhāraṇā (i.e. steady Abstraction of mind) is his wife. Checks and Restraints are said to be his servants. Prāṇāyāma (i.e. Suspending the breath) is his family-priest, and Pratyāhāra (i.e. Withdrawing the senses) is the holder of (the staff of) gold. Dhyāna (i.e. Meditation) is the superintendent of his wealth, so also Satya (i.e. Truth) is the general of his army. From Brahmā to an insect all are the animals and Śiva is their lord.

55-62a. Dharma is the guardian of the animals, and Adharma (i.e. Unrighteousness) is a thief. They (i.e. the animals) are bound by the noose of illusion. Death at Kāśī is the liberator; and women of various sorts (serve) the god of gods, the lord of Umā (i.e. Pārvatī). A crore of beings would remember (i.e. remember) the lord of Umā who is like this. Having obtained desired pleasures they are honoured in Śiva's heaven. Brahmā, Viṣṇu, great Indra are the door-keepers of his city. The two goddesses Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī are appointed to worship the threshold etc. on the ground. Gods and celestial women are the servants of the god of gods. All gods are the servants of the noble one. Ikṣvāku saw such a great mountain. Having saluted the sage Jābāli, he said these words: "O sage, I desire to go to the mountain. Are you capable of doing this (i.e. taking me there) or not? Formerly the wise Yama told me about the short (span of) my life. He told me (that I would stay in) many hells. How can there be absolution (for me)?"

Jābāli said:

62b-66a. By means of my divine eye I too knew all this about you. O brāhmaṇa, your life is (i.e. you will live) for ten (more) days. Though a learned man, you did not practise acts of piety. Due to lack of repeated practice, you have not practised penance. Due to the time being short you (have) not (practised) abstract meditation. You have not given gifts due to absence of wealth. You did not go through worship due to lack of capacity. You did not perform sacrifices. You did not do acts of pious liberality. (Therefore) you, having no life (i.e. having a short life), have no religious merit (to your credit). Due to (your) going against the time you did not resort to teaching or to holy places. So, to destroy that sin, no expiation is laid down; so also no religious practice leading to salvatation is laid down. (Hence,) O sage, stay (here) or go (back).

Ikṣvāku said:

66b-69a. O brāhmaṇa, by means of the religious practice which is performed after taking a pledge throughout life, the destruction of sins definitely takes place. Tell me about those religious practices by means of which my sin will perish; so also (tell me) due to which religious merit I shall go to heaven. O brāhmaṇa sage, be the refuge of me who am extremely afraid of hell. They say that looking after him who has sought one's refuge, is the fruit of all religious practices.

Jābālī said:

69b-70. It is true that within a short time religious merit like that cannot be obtained. As long as falsehood has not ceased, it is possible to speak like that in dreams. There is a secret. It is not spoken (out) to anyone.

Ikṣvāku said:

71a. O sage, protect me who have sought your refuge. My time will pass out.

Jābāli said:

71b-75a. O brāhmaṇa, the secret enjoined by the sacred texts is greater (i.e. more valuable) than my life. (It is) the

worship of Śiva's Phallus. It was practised by Brahmā and others. It destroys all sins. It destroys all calamities. It gives enjoyments and salvation. Therefore, perform the worship of Śiva. O sage, one should not violate the auspicious worship of the Phallus of Śiva. He who would disturb Śiva's worship has cut off my head. It is preferable to be thrown on a spike, to be dragged to hell, to give up one's life, but never violation of (Śiva's) worship.

75b-83a. It is better to fall into fire, to bow down the head, to eat one's own feces, but not the violation of Śiva's worship. The food of him, the mean man, who eats without worshipping the lord, or if he enjoys or eats without uttering Śiva's name, is said to be of sins of the form of food. The crores of the great sins of him who has in his words (i.e. on his tongue) the auspicious name *Śiva* are quickly reduced to ash. The man who goes round (the Phallus of) Śiva (keeping it to) the right and salutes him, would get the same religious merit which one would get by going round the earth. Having gone round (the Phallus) three times and saluted five times, and having again gone round (it) and saluted (it), one would be free from sins. He who would make or cause to make (the sound of) musical instruments in Śiva's temple, is endowed with great power and is born as one who resorts to the Vedas. He who would make the three-eyed god, the god of gods, hear the Purāṇas (i.e. would recite Purāṇas before him), would, being free from all sins and being blessed, live in Śiva's city. The god always speaks to him sweet words with regard.

Jābāli said:

83b-90. This excellent worship of Śiva has been told (to you) in brief. O brāhmaṇa, you are short-lived (i.e. the span of your life is short). Perform the worship of Śiva. Thrice, twice or even once (a day), for a watch, perform Śiva's worship. Resorting to the stage of a recluse, resorting to a recluse, worship Śiva with the flowers of a recluse in the morning. A man should worship Śiva with coconut, lotuses, saugandhikas, nīpa-flowers, japā-flowers, punnāgas, karavīras pāṭalas, tulasī, arkas, aparājitā, apamārgas, rudrajātadamana, with all these and with fruits and bilva leaves and dhūrtakas, droṇa-flowers, abundant śirīṣa flowers, dūrvā, korakas, nandyāvartas, sacred rice grains or

mixed with sesamum only, or with other (materials of worship) according to his capacity. The worship of Śiva is also (done) with karṇikāra flowers and a golden dūrvā.

91-98a. He should not worship Śiva with buds or campaka flowers, except the lotus. All lotuses, leaves and sacred grains, darbhas and flowers should be kept separately from the silver and golden (flowers etc.). O king, cake cooked in oil would not be said to be stale. That which is with fruits and with acid and sour substances or with cumin-seeds should be sprinkled with water. (All) that, viz. roots, fruits, vegetables etc. sprinkled with water is not said to be stale. All that water, viz. water of a great river, water (flowing) from a mountain, or water in the form of a pool (i.e. in a pool), or well-water, or the water that would be (available) from a tank, a lake, well is holy water. It would not be stale. Water should not be procured at night. He should procure it by day. Water with sand (i.e. from a sandy place) should also be taken; for it is not stale. Knowing like this, you offer a worship to Śiva's Phallus.

Śambhu said:

98b-100. That Ikṣvāku dear to brāhmaṇas (or to whom brāhmṇas were dear), thus addressed by the sage, became engrossed in Śiva's worship (and) remained (in doing the worship) for eight days. When the ninth day arrived, he performed (Śiva's) worship in the morning. When the time of his death came, he, having performed Śiva's worship, offered his life as a present to the great lord (Śiva).

101-109a. Knowing him to be dead, Yama's messengers who took (the dead) to Yama's world came (there) and made efforts (to take him). Śiva's messengers, like Vahnimukha, also came there. Among them there was a dispute: 'This is mine, this is mine.' Then, a messenger of Yama, with a noose in his hand hurt a messenger of Śiva. Then Vahnimukha got angry, and becoming of (i.e. turning himself into) a great body, seized a hundred messengers of Yama with one hand and squeezing their heads with another, cut them off like young grass. Then killing the messengers and taking Ikṣvāku (with him) he went (to Vīrabhadra). He presented him to the intelligent Vīrabhadra. He too (presented) him to Śiva. Then the great god said to him: "Every

day for eight days, you offered a worship. Formerly you had censured me saying 'Śiva's Phallus is (just) the tip of a penis.' Therefore, you will be one with a penis-like mouth. On its tip there will be a round hole. You will be without a tongue, a nose etc. (But) because of your having uttered my name formerly, you will be a speaker (also)." Due to the words of the lord he became like that in a moment.

Śambhu said:

109b-112. He who will every day listen to this excellent old account, will, being free from the bond of sins, become Śiva's devotee. He would go to Śiva's place and would also be a speaker. He who tells this story, would be like Śiva. Formerly a king named Adhīra, having told this story, went, though he had committed a sin, to heaven with his wife.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TEN

How a King Became Śiva's Attendant Agniśikha

Śrī Rāma said:

1. Tell me, how this fire named Agniśikha became an attendant of Śiva like that. Salutation to you.

Śambhu said:

2-9a. Formerly he was a kṣatriya who was always angry. He had lost his wife, his army and his country. (Therefore) he was extremely afflicted. Having got a couple of buffaloes, he practised agriculture with his sons. He was full of (i.e. had incurred) a great debt, and so was very much unhappy. The king was also unhappy on account of his son being killed by (the bite of) a serpent. The king, though like that, also gave up agriculture. He also abandoned his two sons, and having given up food, wept. Then the two sons came to the father, and said these (words) to him: "O father, why do you weep? What has

gone does not come (back) by weeping excessively. Your lamentation today will (only) lead to the parching up of your body. Due to the grief your eyes have been impaired; so also your throat has been impaired. Similarly your practice of religious rites has been harmed. (Then) why do you torment (yourself)? One that has gone does not come (back). Protect the five breaths that have remained (with you). It is meritorious to protect many, especially those that have resorted to (a person). How do you grieve over this enemy who has resorted to someone else?"

The father said:

9b-10a. O sons, how (do you say that) a son is an enemy? Then you are also my enemies. How do you call an extremely happy son as an enemy?

The two sons said:

10b-21a. The son, as soon as he is born, would snatch away (the father's) wife. When he is growing he would take away (the father's) wealth. When he dies, he (would take away the father's) life. In what way is enmity different from this? I tell you, O king, that which you described as happiness is all resulting in unhappiness. At the time of the birth of a son, there is a thought about the death of the wife. And if the wife survives, then he (i.e. the husband) loses his happiness. When the vulva has become impure, no union is possible. If he becomes intent on embracing her, his body gets covered with milk (coming out of her breasts). Even then if the union takes place, the heart of the woman necessarily goes to the child due to the child's weeping (i.e. when the child weeps). Then he (i.e. the man) loses interest. Then, if the child falls into (i.e. comes between) the couple that is united, then there is loss of joy. When the union is disrupted, the displeasure is great. When everything is limited by time, there is a possibility of union (only) on some occasion. At that time there is no food, no water, (no union) with his wife. Due to the trouble caused by Planets such as diseases and thirst etc., there is great pain in protecting children. That beautiful pleasure of getting on the father's

lap, embracing and kissing him, speaking very sweet words— (all) this which is regarded as a pleasure does not deserve (i.e. is not equal to) the sixteenth part of discontinuance of coitus. In (i.e. due to) a son, there are other thousands of sorrows. What will you do with him who will oppose you in this world and in the next? Therefore, give up this grief. We two, your sons, are here.

The king said:

21b-25a. I shall give up the grief which is difficult to check and which goes against (i.e. impedes) all acts. O my sons, in this world and the next one should accomplish one's well-being. I shall go to Vasiṣṭha, my priest and the foremost and great preceptor and the best sage. He will give (i.e. show) me the (proper) way.

Speaking thus, he went to his preceptor, the brāhmaṇa living in Vārāṇasī. He saluted him (prostrating before him) like a staff. He was honoured by the sage, was embraced by him, was smelt on his head, and was offered a seat; and was thus addressed: "What for have you come? What should I do for you?"

The king said:

25b-26a. O brāhmaṇa, give (i.e. show) me the way to cross this worldly existence. I am always unhappy with my fate. (Therefore) I have sought your refuge.

Vasiṣṭha said:

26b-32a. It comes to this: take recourse to the lord of the universe (in the form of) the great Phallus. O lord of kings, worship the god of gods, the trident-holder, propitiating whom, formerly, the sage Śakti, the son of Arundhatī, though devoured by a demon, did not go to Yama's world. For a short time he went to heaven, and then went to Brahmā's heaven. My son (i.e. Śakti), (having gone to Viṣṇu's heaven) from Brahmā's world, is sporting in Viṣṇu's heaven. O great king, (also) see this hunter, moving in the forest, and worshipping the lord of the universe, merely with leaves of the śamī-tree collected by himself, with

the flowers of pūga tree, also with the kadamba-flowers and with flowers of the jasmine (creeper). See him worshipping the great lord with these and other (materials). It is a wonder that he will die merely after half a watch from now.

32b-41. When his time of death came, the hunter saw, for offering a present to Śiva, by his side a jar full of mangoes, but censurable due to the fruits being left over (after some of them were eaten) by a dog. Due to the absence of an offering as planned by him, the hunter uttered these auspicious words suggesting the devotion of people: "The sage Jamadagni offered his eye in the absence of flowers, his finger in the absence of fruits, and his soul when the Phallus was falling, and cut asunder his body and offered it when the seat of the Phallus was broken. Other devotees of Śiva have also performed great rash acts. I too have to do like that. Otherwise I shall incur a sin." In the meanwhile a mad man came to Śiva. Having snatched the (materials of) worship performed by the hunter, he, in a moment, ate it up. He also vomitted on the seat of Śiva. Then the hunter thought: 'Should I or should I not kill this one harming Śiva?' Then that devotee of Śiva strove to kill himself. (He said to himself:) 'As this mad man has eaten up the (materials of) worship that I had offered to Śiva, when the Phallus was covered, I must also quickly remove the covering of my body—my skin. This is for making (the materials of) the worship free. One should abandon one's throat due to the loss of the fruit (of the worship)'.

42-52a. Deciding like this, he, with a sharp axe, did a wonder: He cut off the skin (on) his right leg, and below the waist. He also quickly cut off the skin on the left leg up to the waist. Being delighted and trembling, he also cut off the skin about it (i.e. the waist). The hunter who was delighted, also cut off the skin on the hands, shoulders, chest, and throat and also the skin on the head. Then between the two he cut off the body in a circular way, and having cut off his finger and taking it, he offered his skin to the god. Then the devotee of Śaṅkara, of a divine form, of good eyes, having four hands, having many ornaments (on his person), quickly stood in the sky. Then hundreds of thousands messengers of Śiva, having beautiful

crowns, and decorated with all ornaments, having tridents in their hands, all resembling pure crystal, having four arms, of lovely forms, seated in excellent aeroplanes, all resembling the sun, tranquil, accompanied by their beloveds resembling Rambhā, and followed by sons, wives and army, and hundreds of energetic and amorous women resembling the sun in lustre, showered flowers. And the hunter was called by them; but he did not go (to them), and said to them: "Would I or would I not go with my wife and kinsmen?" The followers of Śiva having heard these words of (i.e. uttered by) him, said these (words) to him: "The fruit is to be had by him (only) who has done a virtuous or a sinful act."

The hunter said:

52b-55. Of practices that are impure, the author is (but) one; but of the practices done in honour of Śiva, the fruit (would go to) two or many.

In the meanwhile, Vīrabhadra arrived (there) with a hundred children and many crores of attendants. (He said to the hunter:) "O hunter, come along with your kinsmen. As you said, (you may come) along with your wife, relatives and kinsmen; and having got into this aeroplane, go to Śiva. Well-being to you." Then due to those words, he, having got into the aeroplane, reached Śiva's heaven.

Vasiṣṭha said:

56-60a. You have observed all (this). Perform the worship of the lord. Being free from the bond of sin, you will go to Śiva's heaven. O king, if you long for kingdom, worship the lord of attendants; and besmear (the ground) with water and cowdung every day. By (doing) this much, you will certainly get the kingdom of the earth. As long as you live you will have (i.e. enjoy) the kingdom, and in the end you will go to Śiva's position. You will not get the kingdom during this (existence); but (will get it) after death (i.e. in the next existence). Therefore, after having got another body (i.e. existence), you will have due to the prowess of your service to Śiva, the kingdom, and your devotion to Śiva will be stable.

Śambhu said:

60b-70a. Then, having performed the worship like that, he died and went to heaven. Then he again got the birth of (i.e. was born as) a king, and, being devoted to Śiva, he ruled his kingdom. Once the king went to Śiva's temple, which was having many lamps, like the lord of serpents having gems. There was also the crowd of warriors. One lamp fell on the king. Then the king got angry, and quickly taking the lamp, angrily dropped it in the charming temple. The abode of the god (i.e. the temple) was burnt, and sin came (to him). Then the king again fashioned the temple etc. that was burnt and got Śiva worshipped. Then when the day of his death came, the king who had propitiated Śaṅkara, who had applied sacred ash and who lay in sacred ash, died while muttering (the hymn sacred to) Rudra. He went to Śiva's heaven. Vīrabhadra (thus) spoke to him: "You become best of the attendants, (and) my servant. On my order bring the devotees of Śiva in my proximity (i.e. to me). You will be without a head, and flames will be coming out of your mouth." He then said to Vīrabhadra, the noble chief of the attendants (of Śiva): "How would action be possible for me without eyes, ears, and the group of tongue, nose, mouth and head?"

Vīrabhadra said:

70b-75. The beautiful woman who was formerly accepted by you yourself, every day serves the auspicious bull-bannered god (i.e. Śiva) by arranging an auspicious river, an auspicious eddy etc.; by arranging white and blue lotuses, and also a fan and a chowrie. (She also arranges) a trident, a conch, a disc, a mace and a bow. Also a trident, a drum, a sword, a bull and the auspicious (attendant) Bhṛṅgiriṭi. So also other (objects) like an eight-petalled lotus, a mystical diagram etc. Once that prostitute was present in the temple of the deity. A certain jail official of the king entered the temple of the deity. He saw her there, and said these words:

The official said:

76-78. The prostitute is in a secluded part (i.e. alone). I am young, and not old. A woman would abandon a man who is

old, diseased, impotent, weak and poor, whose penis is short and who is helpless. A woman should avoid from a distance a man who has no moustache, who is covered with dirt, who is dull, and is defiled with a bad odour, who is small and has no addiction. Therefore, O prostitute, let me cohabit with you. Quickly restore me to life.

The prostitute said:

79-80. We hear that for women of all castes loyalty to their husbands is a great duty that gives them happiness in this world and the next. A prostitute, when in the charge of a man, does not unite with any other man. She (then) is known as a chaste woman. Therefore she should keep him (only).

The official said:

81-94. If this is so, there is no doubt that (your) death will soon take place.

Then going to the king, he said these (words:): "A prostitute is (just) a prostitute. She is not a wife. It is not proper (i.e. necessary) to say this." Speaking thus to the king, he took some froth from a hollow lotus stalk from a well, and went to her house. Seeing it was time for (her to) sleep, he extended his hand, and in the hole of her garment, the wicked-minded one put the froth there. Having done like this, and going to the king he said these (words) to the king: "O king, having gone out (of your palace) go to the prostitute, the woman (you love). Having got that prostitute up, please observe her entire body, and loosening the knot of the garment, observe it carefully." The king went to the house, and said these words to the official: "She is asleep. See her. I (now) go. You see (this)." But he then said to the king: "O king, this is not proper for you. Arrange to see her mother or father. When they are seen, all this will quickly be clear." Then the king brought her mother, and made her see (the garment). At the words of the king, she made a search of the garment. Seeing the froth there, the mother rubbed it. The garment became wet due to the rubbing. The king said: "What is it?" The mother of the prostitute said: "There is nothing, O lord, there is nothing." (Thus she told it)

with many words. The king observed the garment with a doubt. He said: "The garment is wet with semen. See it." Then the men who were near there, said to the king: "It is like that." Then the king went home, and said to the chief magistrate: "Now only, without thinking, cut off the head of the prostitute. Within a ghaṭikā (i.e. a period of twentyfour minutes) her head should be shown to me." The chief magistrate also did like that at the words of the king, and showed (it to him).

Vīrabhadra said:

95-96a. Thus you did formerly; (and) today you have got the fruit. With flame only (in your mouth) you will speak, hear, see and smell. You will know the taste; you will be intelligent and very wrathful.

Śambhu said:

96b-98. Thus the intolerant king has become Śiva's follower (named) Jvālāmukhī. Therefore, one who desires happiness in this world and the next, should be tolerant. He who would every day listen to this excellent account, will, being free from the bond of sin, be (i.e. live) in Śiva's heaven.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED ELEVEN

The Sinner Vidhṛta Goes to Śiva's Abode

Śrī Rāma said:

1-2. O preceptor, tell me the importance of the name of the great lord, the importance of worship, of salutation, so also the greatness of sight, the importance of giving water, so also the importance of offering incense, so also of lamp and sandal, O best one.

Śambhu said:

3-8. It is not possible (to describe) in detail the importance of each of the names. I shall tell (it) to you in brief. O Rāma,

listen carefully. Formerly in the Tretā age, there was a powerful king by name Vidhṛta. When his father died, he, even though a child, was consecrated (as the king) on the kingdom. He kept near him all those of his age. He did not like those who were old and learned. He liked the young men who were wicked, who did acts which ought not to be done, who were adept in bringing beautiful women (to the king) and were skilled in acts of stealing. He liked those who were engaged in buffoonery, and who were skilled in dancing. Those who knew the charms of subjugation, also those who knew (the use of) herbs, who were given to singing and dancing, who were rogues, and who knew gambling, were dear to him. That king deserted those who did what his father liked.

9-14. Having had consultations with those wicked ones, he did his acts. He joined these and other wicked (men). Depending upon the words of these (wicked men), he abandoned the advice of the wise. Those who put their fists on the chests and who howled, who knew the essential things about the characteristics of the pudendum muliebre (i.e. the private parts of women), and who were proficient in the technique of sexual enjoyment, were dear to him. That kingdom then became bereft of political wisdom. As elephants, horses, chariots, camels, goats, cows, buffaloes etc. were taken away from here and there, all of them perished. At that time no gems other than the land were seen in that city. He (i.e. Vidhṛta) being vanquished by another king, fled. Having gone to a great forest, he made a mountain the inaccessible place (for his enemies). There, with a few followers, he resorted to the way of life of a thief.

15-21. Having, at various places, shown to thieves and cheats by disposition gold, garments, corn etc. and gems, sandal etc., he made them bind (the possessors) in order to take away their wealth. When he did not get food, he prepared food with the flesh of cows and buffaloes. If he did not get food, he got prepared the meal with the flesh of horses and human beings. Such was his conduct, bereft of offering the prayers (thrice a day) etc. He had only one minister, a demon by name Surāpa. He always ordered him, 'bring, strike,' He, the abode of cruelty and surrounded by a thousand men, thus followed the opinion of the demon and seized men coming from many countries. Having come to know

about the women liked by him, he abducted them. Having enjoyed them for some time, he ate their flesh. Thus killing men and women he ruled unbearably.

22-28. The mean man thus ruled for a thousand years. Then his body became loose due to old age, and he was deformed due to folds (on his body). The place was without any living being all around (as far as the area of) ten yojanas. Then the day of the death of the noble king(?) came. When the time of his death came, all his followers remained by him, surrounding him who had bathed and lay on the ground. The minister Surāpa said "Order me as to what is to be done." Then the king, weak like that, (almost) dead, was afflicted. His life had become weak below the navel. (So) he uttered (these) words with difficulty: "O lord of demons, for all the time you strike, take away forcibly, snatch away." Saying so, he died. The messengers of Yama came (there). Intent on beating (him) they tried to tie him in a wonderful way. Their bonds and nooses were reduced to powder. Also their weapons and staffs were pounded just by the touch of his body. Such wonder took place.

29-34. Then Death himself came there and bound him with his noose. Seeing even the noose of Death cut off, Mṛtyu thought: 'I have seen the death of all mortals but nowhere like this'. When Death was thinking like this, the brave Jvālāvaktra holding a dart and being ordered by Vīrabhadra, suddenly came there. Then seeing Jvālāvaktra, Death quickly ran (away). Seeing that Death running away, Jvālāmukha, (i.e. Jvālāvaktra), the brave one, (said to him): "O thief, stop, stop. Where are you going? A thief gets freed from his sin only on his being put to the gallows." Speaking thus to Death, he pierced by his dart (the body of) Death. Making the dart pass through his shoulder, and having tied his messengers with a rope, and with their feet tied in chains, he took them and went to the king. Putting him into an excellent aeroplane, well-decorated with songs and musical instruments, he approached Vīra(bhadra). He reported everything to him.

35-41a. Vīrabhadra too, reported all that to Śiva whose form was unlimited, who was being served by many hosts of sages and gods led by Brahmā and Viṣṇu, and who was accompanied by Pārvatī. After saluting Śiva he also reported to him

about Mṛtyu on the spike. The powerful Vīrabhadra, the universal soul, remained silent. Seeing Agnyānana (i.e. Jvālāvaktra), Śiva reproached him (and said to him): "O attendant, how did you do this rash act? How are you not afraid of Death, the superior Yama? Tell me all that truly." Having saluted him, that Vahnimukha (i.e. Jvālāvaktra) who was very angry, seeing Death, danced with joy and said: "(This) Death has just committed a theft. Therefore, I put him on the spike." Śiva too got Death freed and made all his messengers sound.

41b-45. Seeing Death Śiva said: "My name remains with them at the time of their death. I give my heaven only to those who have (i.e. utter) my name with some letters fewer or more. It is true, he uttered the word *Prahara* (i.e. 'strike'). They say that the word *Hara* (i.e. Śiva) having just the word *Pra* added to it, gives (i.e. leads to) the (highest) position. Salute these in the vicinity who are muttering (my name) and tell my words to Yama. Those who offer salutation, have restrain, narrate (the glory of Śiva), wait upon (Śiva), resort to his service, become his servants, recite the sacred texts, recite the hymn (in honour of Śiva) of five letters, or recite the *Śatarudriya* hymn, are not to be considered (by you). He, who (utters) my name, he who wears rudrākṣa (rosary), he who applies sacred ash, he who explains the Purāṇas before me, even if he has (committed) all sins, I rule over him. It is not at all the authority of Yama (to punish them).

46-53. Also those men who, though they have (committed) sins, though they are cheats, though they have used others' garments and have enjoyed others' wives, are intent upon dying at Vārāṇasī, or who die on Śrīśaila, are not to be considered (by Yama). Even lice, gad-flies, bugs, beasts etc., insects and ants, serpents, scorpions, pigs, that die at Kāśī, reach Śaṅkara. O Death, having saluted him who uttering his name, would meditate in the temple of his heart upon Śiva who has three eyes, who is Virūpākṣa (i.e. has an uneven number of eyes), whose eyes are the triad (of the Vedas), who has the moon, the sun and fire as his eyes, get away by my order." Having heard what was said by Śiva, Death praised Śaṅkara: "Salutation to you, the lord of deities; salutation to you, the form of gods; salutation to you, the omniscient one; salutation to you, the lord of

animals." Then god Mahādeva (i.e. Śiva) said to Death: "Choose a boon. I am pleased with this eulogy." Death (then) asked for a boon: "O lord, O Śaṁkara, protect me, a sinner belonging to you." Saying "All right" the lord said to Death: "O child, you (can) go." He too went to Yama's world, and told the entire (account) to Yama.

Śambhu said:

54. He who would every day listen to this auspicious, excellent account, is freed from all sins, and goes near Śaṅkara.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED TWELVE

The Story of Śoṇa and His Wife Kalā

Śambhu said:

1-5. (Now) I shall also tell you another account of a woman. (I shall tell you) what Devarāta's daughter obtained by the utterance of (Śiva's) name. The young, very beautiful daughter of Devarāta was the wife of the intelligent Śoṇa, the son of Dhanañjaya. The two were restrained, devoted to pious acts alone, and virtuous. When they had gone for a bath in Gaṅgā, they found a treasure. (When they had gone) to bring clay on the bank that had fallen due to the current, they took a clod of clay and saw a great silver pitcher having a stone on it (i.e. covered with a stone). Then Śoṇa said these words to his dear wife: "How should we act? What should we do that would be beneficial to us?"

The wife said:

6-13a. A man should not undertake any work depending upon the view of a woman. A man should not also share a secret dear to him or (of) any (other kind). If a treasure would be noticed in the presence of a woman, then by groups of such words the woman should be deceived. Whatever remains there is not to be seen by us. If it is wealth, it is not to be seen, (for) it

results in suffering. If it is not known by anyone else, wherefrom can definite knowledge be had? If someone is not seen now, he remains hidden. If there is no hiding (i.e. if someone has not hidden himself), then someone remains (here) deceitfully. If it is not a deception on the part of human beings, then Śiva remains here. If it is not Śiva, then a brāhmaṇa (turned into a) demon (after his death) remains here. If he is not that (demon), then it may be the great lore (Mahāvidyā?) of kings. If the king does not know it, then there is a possibility of an affair (done) in a secret manner. (Or) it may be a trouble from thieves. If you are not cautious, then a great peril will take place.

13b-20. Generally, desire for enjoyment is produced in wealthy kings. From one enjoyment desire for another enjoyment (follows), and it destroys the religious rites. If a woman knows about the wealth found through chance, then she becomes free, and through anger divulges (i.e. may divulge) what is found. Due to anger she becomes one having lack of trust (i.e. she is not trusted); then the fault told before (follows). Trust is put in a familiar person; (so also) journey (is undertaken with him), or the mind is fixed on someone else. Various kinds of acts are possible for women due to trust (put in them). (Their) love would go towards any young man on seeing him. Due to love contact takes place; and due to contact sexual union takes place. When sexual union takes place constantly, then another (place of trust) may occur. Formerly you have enjoyed a woman, and now also you are enjoying one. Whom do you long for now or whom do you love? Which clever or very affectionate woman would go to another man than her own? If today you speak the same words as he spoke to her, then I shall tell you all this. Otherwise no words will be uttered (by me).

21-23a. Having gained so much audacity, so also due to change in form, she would behave independently after taking whatever wealth (she can). He, getting her killed, and taking that wealth, will cause her to be thrown. On the death of the husband before (her death) she should not enter fire (with the thought:) 'In my widowhood, all this wealth will be useful for my religious merit.'

23b-33a. Resolving like this with (i.e. in) her mind, when widowhood has come, she, when she gets an itching of the vulva

(i.e. has a desire for sex) by day or at night, she said (i.e. would say), after having gone to a lonely place and after having uncovered (i.e. taken off) her garment, to her vulva these words, through grief, and with her hand on her generative organ: "O vulva, what have you done? What sin have you committed? Or is it the sin of the penis due to having got into you? Or is it the sin of the doer due to avoiding service like me?" Even then when the itch is produced, she would put her finger (into her vulva); and due to the feeling of the itch she would do strange movements after that. Having rubbed it with her hands, having struck it and having expanded it, she, being extremely pained, repeatedly shook her feet. She, after having embraced the (piece of) wood of the cot, and pressed her breasts (against it) as she liked, became sad due to a peculiar disposition of her mind. Or having in the day stayed in the house she would process the vegetable, and having hung it in the house, she, having changed her dress (would stir out) on the highways in the evening, and is enjoyed by any one. Then due to the prowess of her words, she, being unsuspected, would act indecently. Or going to an unknown house, she would certainly make (someone) sport with her. This is what is expected of the wealth that is obtained in the presence of a woman. Therefore, there is no need for you to consult me (in this matter).

Śoṇa said:

33b-39a. It is so. There is no doubt about it. Go and stay away for evacuation of the bowels and passing urine. Remaining (here for some time) I shall go hereafter. When she had gone, Śoṇa also cut his garment into pieces. Then in each piece he took ample wealth. On the sand-bank, he made a hole as deep as the knee, threw the wealth (into it), filled it (with sand) and evacuated his bowels over it; and he put the pitcher, supporting it with the garment somewhere. Doing all this, as if he knew nothing, the sage went for his bath. Then his wife having bathed and having worshipped Pārvatī, when told by her husband to go, the chaste woman went home. Knowing her to be alone, a demon by name Mārīca assumed the form of her husband and said to Kalā:

Mārīca said:

39b-41a. On the bank of Saptagodāvarī there is (a grove) called Drākṣārāma where Bhīma himself had stayed, which gives enjoyments and salvation and which destroys sins merely by being remembered. Let us go there. O beautiful woman, quickly come out.

Kalā said:

41b-42. You who had proceeded to bathe, have not bathed. How do you say this now, which you have not said before? The best ones know the change of nature as a calamity.

Mārīca said:

43-53. Not to go against the husband is said to be the duty of women. Quickly tell me whether you are friendly or hostile to me.

The chaste woman remained silent, and that he was her husband, the young woman went out with him; and the chaste woman went into a forest. (She said to him:) "It is the mid-day. Perform your daily rites." Hearing her words, the demon said: "This is not the place for performing rites. We have to go to that (region) where it is. So we shall go from here." Having gone to some region, and seeing (there) a cave and a lake (he said:) "This is the place for me to stay at; O dear one, I shall bathe (here)." Saying so, he bathed in the lake and ate fruits. When it was the time for (taking) the meal, Kalā meditated upon Umā (and) Śiva. She was engrossed in reflecting upon whether he was or was not her husband. Then ascertaining by means of reflection that he was a thief, she was frightened, was very submissive, and had her face full of (i.e. bedewed with) tears. Saying, "Oh, a hurtful misery has befallen (me)!" she fell down. Seeing her weeping, the demon started to offend her; and (i.e. but) he (was not able) to offend her. When the demon tried to rape her, she made a covering of stone from her knees up to her navel. The demon, having seen her with a stonelike garment (thought): "I shall kill her and eat her up." Saying so and whirling the sword he proceeded to cut off her head. (She said to him:)

54-57. "I am Kalā. My husband, knowing (you) will curse you. Do not snatch me away." When she just uttered these words, the demon cut off her head. When she met with such a bad (i.e. miserable) death, the messengers of Śiva, who had put on lovely ornaments, who had held all (kinds of) weapons, and who were auspicious, came there. Putting her into an aeroplane, they went to Śiva's heaven. Seeing her who had come there, Umā, the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain, honoured her with joy, and spoke (these) words to her who had bent (i.e. fallen) at her feet and who was pure: "I am pleased with your loyalty to your husband. I (shall) give you whatever is desired by you."

Kalā said:

58-61a. Give me the status of your servant. Your lotus-like feet are dear to me. What is the use of many other requests?

Śivā (i.e. Pārvatī) said: "All right." She was honoured by the wives of Indra and others. The sage Śoṇa, the treasure of arts reached his house. Not seeing his wife there, he became engrossed in reflection. Through his eye of wisdom he saw her to have been snatched away by the demon, to be dead, to have reached Śiva's heaven and Umā, and to have been granted a boon by Umā.

61b-66a. The best sage had some affliction for a long time, turned back and went to his father-in-law Devarāta. Having reported everything to him, he went to sage Viśvāmitra with him. He reported it to Vasiṣṭha. Vasiṣṭha also said to those sages: "Having gone to Kailāsa and having first seen god Maheśvara, and then having got permission from Śiva and gone to Pārvatī's abode, we shall request the goddess and tell her everything properly." The excellent sages, saying "All right", went to Śaṅkara's abode, and saluted the god of gods. Being honoured by Vīrabhadra, they informed him this: "The wife of Śoṇa has been kidnapped."

66b-71. Śiva said to the best sages: "I had already known this. Her death is untimely. (Still the span of) her life is a hundred years (more). For those who have met with an untimely death, there is life again. She will give birth to ten sons; she will have

beauty and good fortune also. Ascertaining this, you have come here, O brāhmaṇas. All this is certain about people that have gone to Yama's world. (But) there is no other course for those who have come to my heaven. Formerly, at the time when her vital breath went out of her body (i.e. at the time of her death) she had uttered my name (viz. Hara). By that the writing of Yama was wiped. Then how (can) a decision (be had) about her life? Or you (better) tell the entire (account) to (Pārvatī) the daughter of the (Himālaya) Mountain." Then the brāhmaṇas went to see the feet of Pārvatī.

72-75. All of them saluted the mother. Viśvāmitra said these (words): "O mother, having formerly protected the wives who were helpless and forlorn and children who had lost their parents, you have always been one who gave whatever was desired. This Kalā is my grand-daughter only. Having propitiated you, she had obtained this Śoṇa as her husband. This is the fruit of your worship. O Aparṇā (i.e. Pārvatī), I shall get (back) Kalā through penance, or through charity, or through vows and fasts. I desire to eat food served by her. How (can I have it)?"

Pārvatī said:

76. I give the wife as she is desired to be (by her husband). I am unable to part with her. What do you think, O sage?

Viśvāmitra said:

77. I spoke without any fear as you are (our) mother. O mother, this sage Śoṇa will (now) request you.

Śoṇa said:

78. I love that wife (i.e. Kalā) only, (since) the chaste one gave (me) more than said (i.e. asked for by me). Give me that wife only. Otherwise death would come (to me).

Pārvatī said:

79-80a. The wife and husband (should be) equal to (i.e. fit for) each other. Those that are not equal (i.e. fit) are condemned. This one is not proper for you. I shall give you a suitable one. I shall not desert her who came to my abode without a body.

Śoṇa said:

80b-83a. If you do not give (back) this wife, then give me another dear to me; and give me, as an excellent boon, kingdom, and devotion to Śiva.

"It will be just like this." Speaking thus, she said to the sages: "Here, in my (house), you will enjoy for three days. To please god Śiva, eight brāhmaṇas are always to be fed on every Monday, O best sages".

83b-87a. As one desires, one should commence this vow anywhere. When a year is over, one should get fashioned (the image of) the lord with gold weighing four niṣkas or half of it. One should assign all these (articles)—a pair of fine white garments, two chowries, also a couple of fans, wooden sandals, shoes, an umbrella—to a brāhmaṇa. Having given gifts to brāhmaṇas, one should dismiss the brāhmaṇas. A wise man should do so at the time of the conclusion, the beginning and in the middle (of the vow).

87b-93. Every day he (should offer) worship to Śiva, the highest soul. The hymn to be recited at the time of the worship is: 'We know (the lustre) of the Puruṣa. We reflect upon that (lustre) of Mahādeva. May Rudra, therefore, urge us on'. He should worship the god on an altar or in an image. He himself endowed with (i.e. observing) celibacy, should eat once (a day). This is said to be the auspicious vow of (i.e. in honour of) Śiva. It gives pleasure to Śiva. One, a man or a woman, who devoutly practises this (vow), always follows Śaṅkara like his shadow. Today Monday has come (i.e. it is Monday). So meal (will be taken) after mid-day. O you best sages, all of you, after having performed the forenoon rites, please eat food (here)." Hearing the words of the mother (i.e. Pārvatī), and saying "All right", they went to river Gaṅgā for the performance of religious rites.

94-100. Performing their mid-day rites in the confluence and having worshipped the lord of the universe with the sixteen articles of worship, they went to Pārvatī's house and saluted her. By the order of the mother of the worlds, Śālaṅkāyana's son arranged for the formalities like washing the feet. He took the pañcagandhaka (i.e. five fragrant substances) and applied them to (the bodies of) the sages. He who would give pañcagandhaka,

would obtain a great kingdom; and being like Cupid, he would be dear to women. He too, who would offer (presents) to Viṣṇu, would become like Cupid. He who would long for Śiva (and observe a vow) for five years on Kailāsa, would be born as a king having all fragrances, would enjoy pleasures, whould move (as he likes), would behave according to his desire. Musk, sandal, camphor with double agaru are (together) called pañcagandhaka. It is auspicious in all rites.

101-107. When the illustrious brāhmaṇas, to whose bodies pañcagandha was applied, were seated, there came an old, weak, brāhmaṇa dressed like a mad man. He was stark naked, was disabled due to old age and was hurrying. He was bald-headed; he suffered from asthma; he very much hiccoughed; he was oppressed with hunger. He was oozing saliva, had bent with a brush-like moustache and phlegm and his steps were faltering. (He was accompanied by) a girl sixteen years old; she was decorated with all ornaments. She was endowed with form and beauty. She was excellently beautiful in the world. She was looking at men here and there; she was singing; she was dancing, looking at her husband; she was laughing at him. She troubled her old husband (saying): "O weak, mean man, come quickly. O old man, by supporting your hand constantly, I am afflicted. Ornaments, garments, fragrances, garlands, unguents, laughter, singing, also drinking, decoration, a good house, affluence in all seasons are for the augmentation of sex only.

108-112a. Sex alone is the purpose of all desires. If all the pleasures are placed together (on one side) and pleasure of sex remains (i.e. is placed on the other side), and if they are weighed with a balance (then) sexual pleasure is a hundred times more (weighty). Then having obtained (a husband like) you what will a woman like me do?" She, holding him by his hand, spoke these and other words. He gave this reply to her: "What shall we do? Our destiny is like this, knowing me to be like this, do not strike me with bad words." Such a brāhmaṇa went to Pārvatī's house at that time. Not recognising Pārvatī at all he spoke these words:

The brāhmaṇa said:

112b-114a. O sage, know me to be a brāhmaṇa who has

come here for food at the time of (serving the) meals. Do not feed the brāhmaṇas.

His wife said (these) words: "Where is the sage? This is just a woman. The words of a blind man are always certainly like this."

Pārvatī said:

114b-119. Having washed his feet, make him sit on a seat.

She has not satisfied the brāhmaṇa having a vessel (decked) with good jewels by the food cooked in a golden vessel. Then Ambikā (i.e. Pārvatī) called Arundhatī who expounded the Vedas and made her dress the food. Kalā, Arundhatī and the chaste Anasūyā, who were decorated with garlands, sandal, and sacred rice-grains, dressed separately the articles of food of six flavours. When the brāhmaṇas were eating, that naked, brāhmaṇa (-like) figure in a moment ate everything. The ladies could not give (i.e. serve food) to others. Then that goddess Girijā herself started giving (i.e. serving) food, as the brāhmaṇa in a moment ate up whatever was served.

120-124. He desired to eat, along with his beloved, everything that had remained in the vessels. Then Ambikā took it and gave it saying, "Let this be inexhaustible." Then he desired to eat with the lelf hand. Then also saying, "Let this food be inexhaustible for you", gave it to him. Then the best brāhmaṇa produced a thousand hands like this, and desired to eat. The goddess gave him again and again, but did not get angry. Then the brāhmaṇa, realising that he could not divert her mind, washed his hands and feet, and with a fragrant substance applied to his hands, said these words to Pārvatī: "I am pleased. Ask for a boon."

Pārvatī said:

125-127. O best brāhmaṇa, even if you are capable of granting me a boon, what is the use of the boon to me, since Śaṅkara is my husband.

Then the brāhmaṇa said to the goddess: "Of what kind is

Śaṅkara? Is he suitable or not for you? He would be suitable for you, and not otherwise. Handsomeness and cleverness are liked by women. How otherwise such an auspicious woman would have come under my influence?"

Pārvatī said:

128. O brāhmaṇa, having heard your wife's words, and also your words, this is untrue. O brāhmaṇa, is it untruth or venom?

Brāhmaṇa said:

129. I shall tie your braid; sit upon my lap. If your mind will be diverted, wherefrom would be your chastity (i.e. how can you be called chaste).

Pārvatī said:

130-136. O best brāhmaṇa, my vow is to sit on the lap of Śaṅkara only.

Then the highest god, knowing the mind of Pārvatī, became a youth of sixteen years. His tied hair was very glossy. His charming eyes were very affectionate. His body was (fair) like cow's milk. His handsomeness was like that of a crore of Cupids. He was adorned with all ornaments. He had spread both his hands on the shoulder of the woman seated by his side. He sang gently as (Śiva) with Umā. Then Śambhu dragged Pārvatī with his hand, and smiled. Putting both his hands on the two shoulders of the lady (i.e. Pārvatī), he, with all ornaments (on his body), and with pleasing eyes, with his body full of joy and sung (i.e. praised) by sages, sang and danced at that time. By meditating upon Śiva like this, he (i.e. a man) has no grief for hundreds of crores of existences. Joy always comes to him. Thus praised by the best sages, he changed the girl into Viṣṇu. Then that Pārvatī who was pleased, said to the trident-holder:

Pārvati said:

137-141a. Why is it that taking recourse to this condition and turning Viṣṇu into a young girl. Why did you not come in your natural (i.e. original) forms (as Śiva and Viṣṇu)?

Śiva said: "In this vow the food (taken as) a guest is auspicious. I know that those who do not have dejection obtain perfection. It is definite that when there is dejection, the vow is improper. He would, O respectable lady, (stay) in my city, will be endowed with all enjoyments, and living along with his wife, sons and relatives, his (full) life as told in the Vedas, will later go to Vārāṇasī, and having died (there) will obtain salvation."

Śambhu said:

141b-145. When the god remained there, the sages went round him, keeping him to the right, thrice, then saluting five times, again having gone round him, again being (i.e. prostrating themselves) like a staff, and being dismissed by him, went out from that place. Then Śoṇa obtained his wife whose body was auspicious and who was not censured (i.e. was praised). The brāhmaṇa religiously ruled in the country called Bhārata. The devotee of Śiva enjoyed all human pleasures. He was always engaged in charity. He always performed sacrifices and always listened to (the recital of) the Purāṇas. When he died, he went to the auspicious heaven of lord Śaṅkara.

Śambhu said:

146-147. As the occasion had come, I told (you) the importance of the utterance of his names. It destroys all the sins of the listeners—the devotees. It gives all auspicious things. It always gives a good wife and a (good) kingdom. It is auspicious. It gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Śiva. It is to be observed. A man should not tell it to any one.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED THIRTEEN

The Requirements for Narrating a Purāṇa

Śrī Rāma said:

1-6. In the sky are seen seated in aeroplanes auspicious ones having many forms, good wives, and hundreds of women.

At every step they are honoured by thousands of men and women. Twenty damsels, delicate with (good) figures and beauty, are singing. One is carrying a small box; some have their arms attached with (i.e. are carrying) chowries. (Some) have taken a pair of tāla fans and are fanning. Another (man) has made the pillow of her lap. He has given his hand in the hands of one. He is surrounded by many flatterers. His lotus-like face is blooming due to jests of many kinds done (i.e. indulged in). In one aeroplane, he, having the moon's brightness is seen. In the aeroplanes having hundreds of women, the auspicious lord is seen. Have these done (acts of) religious merit? Or is it (simply) Viṣṇu's illusion, O sage?

Śambhu said:

7-11. These are meritorious brāhmaṇas, leading a householder's life. Your (father) Daśaratha had given that food to them. Once a thought arose in (the minds of) them who are my hearts, as, 'we who depend upon others are happy here. Here hundreds of men depend on us. Due to that religious merit all of us enjoy as we desire. We are waited upon by good women, and are endowed with the pleasure of kingdoms. We are free from old age and death, and we are always young.' Having thought like this, all the brāhmaṇas went to Vasiṣṭha's hermitage. Having honoured them who had come (to him), Vasiṣṭha said (these) words: "O best brāhmaṇas, speak quickly why you have come (to me)."

The brāhmaṇas said:

12-17a. All of us desire to get into an aeroplane which is endowed with all riches and which goes according to the desire (of the occupant). O preceptor, procure it for us.

Hearing this thought (i.e. desire) of them, Vasiṣṭha spoke (these) words: "O brāhmaṇas, Purāṇa which destroys sins, should always be listened to. In it only are seen righteousness (dharma), material welfare (artha) and sensual enjoyments (kāma)." Saying, 'All right', the sages went to sage Aṅgiras who was proficient in Purāṇas, was the greatest (sage), knew all sacred texts, all the scriptures and Purāṇas, and always did good

deeds. Having saluted him, they spoke these words to him: "O brāhmaṇa, our life is fruitful, we are contented, since, O sage, we have seen you."

Aṅgiras said:

17b-22a. I shall do the work for which you have come (to me). With a desire to listen to Purāṇas you have come here. I shall narrate to you the sacred precept which destroys all sins, gives all (kinds of) knowledge, is divine, has sprung up from the knowledge of truth, gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Śiva, is charming, gives (i.e. creates in one) devotion to Viṣṇu, is auspicious, which would give (one) a beautiful woman, which (contains) auspicious knowledge of various kinds, discloses the science of sexual love, has enjoyment and salvation as the chief (aim), which illuminates various systems of philosophy, tells about various (kinds of) devotion, which narrates daring courage in devotion, gives the rules about a vow, a site etc. and about (applying) the sacred ash and about worship.

22b-25. The Padma Purāṇa is said to have been accomplished from the lotus of Brahmā. It is narrated by Śiva, and (contains) the description of Pramatha's (an attendant of Śiva) form. This is told elsewhere in the Padma Purāṇa itself. Formerly, Vasiṣṭha, when asked by Dilīpa, narrated it. O best sages, listen to it, (thereby) you will have all knowledge.

Then, by his words the brāhmaṇas got interested in listening to the Purāṇa. They said to the sage (Aṅgiras): "Now doing what, and how should we listen to it?" He too told everything.

26-33. "Listen to the ancient practices. A man (who wants to listen to a Purāṇa) should salute him who knows the Purāṇa and then should offer him a respectful seat. Then saying, '(Please) be seated', he should worship him with sandal and flowers; or he should also offer him wealth and tāmbūla. He should say to him: 'O brāhmaṇa, tell (us) the auspicious story from the Purāṇa.' For the accomplishment of religious merit, material welfare and sensual enjoyments, he should listen to it not by sitting upon a cot or (any other high seat) but (should listen to it) by sitting upon a low seat. The knower of the Purāṇa, having said to the listener, 'Listen', should recite this

hymn: A man deserves to (i.e. should) explain the Purāṇa (after saying) 'Salutation to Viṣṇu, Śiva, Gaṇeśa and Sarasvatī' and having saluted the desired deity. Every day he should listen (to the Purāṇa) or as he would desire. In the same way he should listen to the narration up to the end, (and then) should do his duty. The listener should silently reflect on it; he should silently listen to it. Otherwise Sarasvatī would be angry, and due to her anger dumbness would come. Therefore, the listener should offer tāmbūla etc. (to the narrator); and according to his capacity, he should also undertake the subsistence of the speaker (i.e. the narrator).

34-38. At the commencement (of the narration) of the Purāṇa he should give (the narrator) a pair of washed garments, or should give him a subtle garment or a pair of garments, and (should give him) a great, lovely, beautiful, strong and soft seat. Similarly he should give (him) gold, and cows, a residence etc. O best of all brāhmaṇas, formerly Daksiṇāmūrti Śiva narrated this to sages residing in heaven." Then all the sages, having saluted him seated on the seat, and having separately given him a tāmbūla, remained there with a desire to listen (to the Purāṇa). He too, narrated the whole Purāṇa, which gives everything. The best sages listened to it till the last chapter.

Dilīpa said:

39. A holy place was reached by the aeroplane which moved according to the desire (of the occupant), was equipped with all luxuries, and was fully provided with all facilities.

Vasiṣṭha said:

40-46a. O king, you have not asked enough. That is said to be holy which enables one to be more sportive, O king. He should make Śiva's temple white with whitewash on all sides. He should have women who are endowed with beauty and graceful movements, adorned with all ornaments, skilled in (singing) many good songs, and proficient in various kinds of dancing. There should be four, eight, or six women sounding a drum. Two should be powerful, two should be professionals having the bow of a lute and drum-stick. Four should be dancers, and one should be a contented singer. One or two are

said to be knowing singing well and not garrulous. Two should be kept for (playing upon) the lute, and six or eight are silent. All should be beautiful and should have graceful movements. All should be of firm breasts. They should be skilled in the ways of sexual love and should be trustworthy. Their dresses should be of very fine garments, and their eyes unsteady like (flashes of) lightning.

46b-52. O king, he who has caused women like this to dance (even) on one day, gets into a (divine) aeroplane in a year. His face is looked at by hundreds of women. He is honoured by many young (women). He is complete with his joy being nourished. He is without anger and jealousy. His body is smeared with pañcagandha. His face is like a piece of (i.e. small) cloud with the moon. He is like the sun. All the ten women are having brilliance like that. They have garlands of the pārijāta-flowers which have blossomed the same day and which are fragrant. All have garlands of blossomed flowers of rohi and saffron joined together. They carry the braid on their breasts. Their lips have a good (i.e. sweet) smile on them. He moves being delighted by women like these with dancing and singing. Thus he gets into a (divine) aeroplane and having lived (in heaven) for an inexhaustible (i.e. very long) period, he then would be born as a king. Having ruled over the kingdom like this (i.e. as a king) and having enjoyed the fruit (of the stay in) heaven, he will become a devotee of Śiva.

Śambhu said:

53-56. Aṅgiras told the sages what Vasiṣṭha had told Dilīpa. They executed, like that, the union of song and dance of (i.e. in honour of) the lord of Umā; and having listened to the entire Padma Purāṇa, they became happy. O Rāma, these are those brāhmaṇas who are seated in the excellent aeroplane, in the sky, and appear to be happy and of delighted minds. I have told you all this as ascertained in (i.e. by) the Purāṇas. O Rāma, what other (i.e. more) than this do you wish to hear ?

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FOURTEEN

Dialogue between Śiva and Rāma

Rāma said:

1-5. Who is this seen in the sky, who is adorned with all ornaments, seated in an aeroplane, who is, as it were, another sun very brightly shining at mid-day and difficult to be looked at by all mortals? On his lap is a sweet-smiling lady like another Lakṣmī. So also there are five good (i.e. beautiful) women. They are singing a sweet song, accompanied by their glances with knitted eye-brows, gentle smiles and sounds made by clappings. At times they are singing songs in their throats (i.e. singing in subdued tones), by striking on one another's hands, and by looking at one another's faces with cupidity preceded by songs. Tell me, due to what religious merit the great meditating sage resembling filaments of lotuses, is sporting like this.

Śambhu said:

6-16. O Rāma, this brāhmaṇa was formerly endowed with all (kinds of) riches. He had many pleasures. He was engaged in maintaining his wife. He was sonless. He was without (i.e. he did not give in) charity. He was without the worship of (i.e. did not worship) deities. He was bereft of the five (great) sacrifices and without self-study. He was bent upon eating (only) in the morning, mid-day and evening. He was impure. Once he went to the house of noble Gautama on the holy mountain of Tryambaka resorted to by many hosts of sages. There also was a beautiful house fashioned with pillars of crystal. Its walls were smeared with liquid agaru (sandal), musk and camphor. Its ground was beautiful with the fragrance of the santāna-flowers and was sprinkled with musk and juice of flowers. It was beautified with many fine, white canopies. The courtyard was adorned with large plantain and nut trees. In the lake nearby there was the sweet humming of the bees. The quarters were filled with the fragrance produced by the sandal-trees. The quarters were filled with instruction in songs and joyful songs. It was fashioned with a machine removing the heat produced in summer. In it a cover is made with the citraka tree

covering the shoots of the plantain trees. The very glossy and thick panels of the doors are made of the pāṭīra tree. The inner walls are fashioned in such a way as to be fragrant and giving great joy. As a portion of the lord a beautiful, pleasant raised seat is prepared. The seat is fashioned with gold and is having a beautiful altar. It has very pleasing and thick shade.

17-20. It is fashioned at the root of a bunyan tree. It is decorated at its skirts with lakes having flowers and groups of plantain trees. It has the clouds showing sprays as they are touching the great bunyan tree. It is decorated with beautiful groves having breezes from heavenly gardens. It is decorated with wells, lakes etc. and with many groves. In that abode wind giving comfort, blew very gently. Excellent women beautiful in all limbs and the wealth of Cupid, played on different musical instruments such as a lute, a flute and a pipe.

21-25a. Women had triple symphony (of song, dance, instrumental music) in (all) the four directions and above also. In golden vessels etc. were put auspicious tablets of sacred ash. They were made fragrant with all fragrant substances and were fumigated with good incenses. Heaps of kuśa were arranged; there were crores of rosaries. In the outskirts there were hundreds of deer-hides. In such a house the best sage, fit to be saluted by gods, put camphor etc. in the four directions, and arranged a throne of camphor on the seat of sandal, which was fine, white, very glossy and was covered with camphor.

25b-32a. He bathed (the Phallus of) Saṅkara with water made fragrant and with milk. Having got Sadāśiva bathed with the accompaniment of other Vedic hymns, he put a piece of cloth as a seat on the wooden seat with camphor. He put a vessel with parts in front of it. He put these (articles) in the (various) parts (of the vessel). In one pot he put the sacred rice grains. In another he put sacred rice grains with sesamum. In one he put pañcagandha; in another he put aṣṭagandhaka. He also (put) the musk from Kāsmīra, camphor and sandal in other pots and arranged them at the place of worship. Then the worship was done in the way selected. God Sadāśiva with five faces remains in the Phallus. The Phallus is his cover. Śakti (power, his counterpart) is placed there. Viṣṇu is the cover of Śakti, and Brahmā is the cover of Viṣṇu. The Moon is the cover

of Brahmā; the Sun is the cover of the Moon. The sacred texts are his (i.e. the Sun's) cover. They are protected among the goddesses of the quarters; and they are covered by the quarters. Śambhu is the cover of the quarters, and the qualities are his cover.

32b-42a. The worship of the Phallus of Śiva with ten covers is auspicious. This would be (i.e. is) the opinion of some. The cover of knowledge is said (to come) after (these) covers. It is said to have the cover of Umā. Viṣṇu is its cover. Brahmā is Viṣṇu's cover. The Moon is the cover of Brahmā. The Sun is the cover of the Moon. The lord is the cover of the Sun. Thus the cover is said to be of sixteen kinds. The fivefold cover without Brahmā is said to be the best. These three are the covers of the Moon, Viṣṇu and Śakti. The unique cover—the cover of Ambikā—is said to be the best. Or in the worship of Śiva, the guardians of the quarters would be (i.e. are) the cover. In case of Śiva uncovering or worship is recommended. One should worship Śiva with the articles placed in the eight parts of the vessel. I shall describe the characteristics of the vessel useful for all rites. It shines with gold or is made of copper. A man should fashion the eight auspicious parts of the vessel resembling pearl-oysters. He should fashion it with eight angles resembling the petals of a lotus. It is recommended to have the parts of the measure of a pala. It should be uncovered and of large parts. In the centre it should not be large. At the top it should have eight parts of the size of a lotus. Or through the Śakti he should have it with five parts. Or should make it with three in the Śakti, and as he thinks.

42b-47. The wise one should keep the vessel in such a way as it looks beautiful. The rosary fashioned with eight hundred rudrākṣas hidden in the Śakti is auspicious. He should have the sacred thread with thirty or eight. One should be put on each of the cheeks and two should be tied on the forearms. He held one on the head and the great sage had one around his neck. The rosary was made with rudrākṣas and crystals and gems. The sage has fashioned a seat of tiger-skin and was seated in the Padmāsana posture.[1] Having finished invoking (the deity), having

1. Padmāsana—A posture in which the left foot is put at the root of the right thigh and the right foot is put on the left thigh.

offered him a seat, materials of worship, water for washing the feet and rinsing the mouth, he bathed Śaṅkara with the water of Gaṅgā and with flowers of bakula and pāṭala along with aṣṭagandha kept in golden vessels, and (wiped the Phallus) well with a washed piece of cloth.

48-53. At the door was kept a copper pan. It was auspicious with an oval wooden vessel; so also with a cow-horn and the horn of a gavaya, or with a conch curved to the right or with pots decked with jewels, or with golden or silver or copper or bell-metal pots; he bathed (the Phallus) according to his desire with (water from) the fine golden pitchers. A man may even bathe (the Phallus) with water from earthen vessels or with lotus petals, or with (water from) vessels made of (the leaves of) palāśa, mango, jambu and other trees. He should bathe the lord. He should, after having solicited the lord with the hymn 'salutation to you' etc. called *Śatarudriya* or with the repetition of *Śaṁ ca*, of the nature of tranquillity, then apply sandal etc. according to his capacity. Then he should worship him with nice flowers and bilva-leaves.

54-70. That Gautama worshipped the lord with (the leaves of) tulasī and maruvā, white and big blue lotuses, so also with blue lotus and water-lilies, so also with karavīra-flowers, with karṇikāra-flowers, white lotuses, (the leaves of) the aparājitā (creeper), with sesamum and sacred rice grains, with sarala-leaves mixed with sesamum. Thus (he worshipped) the great lord. He fumigated him with camphor, agaru (sandal), musk, sarja, and agaruka-sandal and with other (incenses). He lighted sixteen lamps having camphor-wicks and put on props. He made an excellent offering of eatables to Maheśa. It contained food of well-cooked rice and flour; (it contained varieties of food) like those that could be eaten, that could be licked, that could be sucked; it was accompanied with sweet articles, and with food of five types; it was rich with many cooked vegetables, and mixed with many cooked articles. The drink was accompanied by twenty (ingredients), and with grapes and plantains; it was accompanied by eight kinds of soup, and with roots and fruits. It was also arranged with other articles as were available. The sage offered the food with excellent flowers. Having offered a thousand lights (to be waved in front of the deity) kept in golden

vessels to the deity and having saluted him, he (offered) crushed pieces of nut, washed leaves, with the tops of their backside (not visible), and covered with a very white cover. He also offered auspicious camphor-powder put on three leaves. He also offered the tāmbūla kept in a golden vessel to the lord. Then after he had gone round the deity by keeping him to the right, and saluted him, eight women who had held lutes and flutes and who were playing on beautiful musical instruments reached the vicinity of the sage. He himself, taking a small instrument of bell-metal, started singing. When Gautama started singing, the women protracted the tone. Others gently played upon the musical instruments. When the sage was singing sweetly, those having the manifestation of notes, danced in front of Maheśa. It was (a) wonderful (sight). In the meanwhile the revered sage Nārada arrived (there). Gautama also honoured and saluted him who had come (there), and said to him: "I am fortunate. None else is like me. What is the object of your arrival and wherefrom have you come?"

Śrī Nārada said:

71-74a. Having eaten in Bāṇa's abode, I have come (here) from the nether world. The noble ones, Bāṇa, Śukra and others will come to (your) house.

Then in a moment the demon Bāṇa, conqueror of the enemies' cities, mounted upon an elephant and accompanied by (an army of) twenty akṣauhiṇīs[1], came there. Śukra (had mounted) upon another elephant. Prahlāda (was seated) in an excellent chariot. Vṛṣaparvan (was seated) in an excellent chariot, and Bali on an excellent horse.

74b-83. Knowing them all to have arrived, Gautama along with his disciples went out and hurriedly offered them a respectful offering. They also, seeing Gautama, got down from the elephant etc. The demons also saluted him. The best sage saluted Bhārgava (i.e. Śukra), embraced all the demons, duly honoured them and made arrangements for the camping of the army. The sage washed

1. Akṣauhiṇī—A large army consisting of 21870 chariots, as many elephants, 65610 horses and 109350 foot soldiers.

the feet of Śukra and put (i.e. sprinkled) water on his head, and offered him a worship with beautiful fruits. All the demons, along with their priests having offered the rites, after bathing in the wells, lakes and ponds, entered that auspicious abode—the hermitage of Gautama, situated on the confluence, and worshipped the deities in the brāhmaṇa's house. Śukra worshipped Śiva on the altar which was immediately fashioned. On his left side only, Prahlāda worshipped Viṣṇu; and Bali worshipped Śiva. So also other excellent demons (worshipped other deities). Bāṇa worshipped god Śiva alone. Śukra too worshipped the revered lord of Umā. In the mid-day Gautama also worshipped Śaṁkara. All had put on white garments; the bodies of all were dusted with sacred ash. All had made marks of three lines on the proper places (of their bodies) with white sacred ash.

84-88. Having saluted Śukra, all of them commenced purification of the elements. In the lotus of the heart there is a cavity. In it are the five elements. Among them is ether; in ether there is pure air. In it is the great lord. A man should meditate upon him, the bright and auspicious one. The element is united with ignorance, is impure, and connected with everything. He should burn that body in the lamp of ether with the fire of knowledge. Having burnt egotism covering ether, he should then burn ether. Having burnt the ether, he should burn air and then the element of fire. Then having burnt the element of water and the element of earth, he should burn the qualities resorting to them and then should get burnt his body.

89-92. The man, having thus burnt the elements with the fire of knowledge, (should worship) Viṣṇu who remains in the lock of hair on the crown of the head, who is full of the flavour of joy, who is having rays like those coming from the moon, and who is auspicious, with the rays produced from Śiva's body and united with the nectar-liquid. Then the flame (becomes) very cold like the rays of the moon. The inundation has also become dense due to the spreading lustres of the nectar. Gradually the group of elements is inundated.

93-97a. Having thus purified the elements, the pure mortal, fit to perform the rites becomes pure only for offering the worship and doing the muttering (of hymns). Then on meditation upon the god, the destruction of the sin due to the murder of a brāh-

maṇa follows. Having in this way meditated upon him, lustrous like the moon's light, and quickly placed (the deity) in the Phallus of Śiva, having thought on Sadāśiva in the lamp, he should worship the immutable with (the hymn of) five letters. He should also go through the formalities like invocation, should bathe (the Phallus of) Śaṅkara as before. The seat should be made of udumbara, silver, gold, and should be covered with cloth etc. In the end he should shower bubbles on the seat. He should fashion one (representation of) snake in the seat above, a pair of them near the deity, on the right side and the left. In between the serpents he should put a japā-flower and a piece of cloth of (the measure of) twelve prātis[1].

97b-99. He should put the lord of the form of the Phallus and fit to be worshipped with very white (materials) and along with the seat on the piece of cloth. The demons led by Bāṇa and others, having done this, and having repeatedly offered pañcagandha and aṣṭagandha, having worshipped (the deity) with flowers, leaves, sesamum-seeds, sacred rice grains mixed with sesamum-seeds or with only sacred grains, having duly offered incense, having presented a lamp, and an offering as told (before), having finished the remaining (part of the) worship, all of them sang and also danced there.

100-113a. In the meanwhile there came Gautama's disciple named Śaṅkarātman. His dress was like that of a mad person—he was naked, and had many coverings. At times he appeared like an excellent brāhmaṇa, at times like a cāṇḍāla. At times (he looked) like a śūdra. At times (he looked) like a meditating saint or an ascetic. He roared, jumped and danced, praised and sang. He wept, heard clearly; at times, he fell (and again) rose. He was endowed with Śiva's knowledge only; he was full of great joy. He arrived at the time of the meals, and went near Gautama. He ate with his preceptor eating at times what was left over by the preceptor. At times he licked up the plate of the preceptor; at times he went (away) silently. Holding the preceptor's hand, he, at times, himself ate (food). At times he urinated in the house (itself); at times he applied mud (to his body). He always held his preceptor with his hand and taking

1. Prāti—The span of the thumb and the forefinger.

him into his abode seated him on his own seat and fed him. The sage Gautama himself ate from his plate. To know his mind, a beautiful, auspicious lady Ahalyā called the disciple and said to him, "Eat". She put foodin a golden pot and a drink (like water) etc. in a goblet. She put fire in a plate, and a heap of charcoals and of thorns in another, and (said to him), "Eat, eat (these)". The sage also ate (them). The brāhmaṇa ate up the fire, as (easily as) he would drink water. He also ate the thorns and remained as before. Formerly he was invited for food by the daughters of the sages. Every day they gave him clods, water and cowdung. Eating mud, wooden staff, he was pleased and delighted.

113b-120. Such was the sage having the figure like that of a cāṇḍāla. Taking his old shoes in his hands (one in the right and one in the left), and (using) words fit for a śūdra he came to Vṛṣaparvan. The naked (disciple) stood between Vṛṣaparvan and the lord. Vṛṣaparvan, not knowing him, harassed him and cut off his head. When the best brāhmaṇa was killed, this mobile and immobile world became extremely excited; so also the sages in it. The very noble Gautama was very much afflicted. Tears, indicating his grief, went (i.e. flowed) out of his eyes. In presence of all the demons, Gautama uttered (these) words: "What (great) sin he has committed since he has cut off this head of this constant devotee of Śiva and greater (i.e. dearer) than my life (to me). It is virtually my death as the preceptor is of the form of his disciple. Certainly we must die where (i.e. when) the death of Śiva's devotees, full of piety and always living in Śiva, is seen".

Śukra said:

121-125. I shall bring him back to life. Śiva is dear to my family. How can this brāhmaṇa die? See the power of my penance.

When the best brāhmaṇa was speaking like this, Gautama also died. When he died, Śukra also cast his life through deep meditation. Learning from Prahlāda that he was dead, all the lordly demons died just in a moment. That was a wonder. The

army of that intelligent Bāṇa also died. Ahalyā tormented with grief, repeatedly and loudly wept. The lord was worshipped with (the materials of) worship of Śiva by Gautama. The great meditating sage Vīrabhadra on seeing all (that) got angry.

126-135. He said: "Oh how painful! Many lords are dead. I shall inform Śiva of this; I shall do as he tells." Having determined like this he went to the immutable one to the Mandara mountain. Having saluted Śiva, he told him all this. Seeing Brahmā and Viṣṇu standing there, Śiva spoke (these) words: "O Viṣṇu, seeing the daring act done by my devotees, I the granter of boons, will go (there). You two also will come (with me)." Then the lord mounted upon the bull (i.e. Nandin). Chowries were moved by Vāyu. Extremely lovely umbrellas were held (over the lord's head) by Nandika who was very well dressed. The very white, golden staff of the lord was held by some ascetic. Obtaining the consent of the lord, Viṣṇu got on the enemy of the serpents (i.e. Garuḍa). He whose Kaustubha (gem) was noticeable, shone with two reddish and dark blue umbrellas. With Śiva's consent Brahmā also mounted upon his swan. Brahmā shone with two umbrellas having the brilliance and form of the indragopa insect. All gods led by Indra got into their own vehicles. Gladdened by (the sound of) various musical instruments all of them set out. Crowded with crores of (Śiva's) attendants, Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva went to Gautama's hermitage. Seeing that great wonder (Śiva) brought his devotee back to life by looking at him from the corner of his left (eye). Śaṁkara said to Gautama: "I am pleased with you. Ask for a boon."

Gautama said:

136-140. If, O lord of gods, you are pleased with me, and if a boon is to be granted to me, then let me always have the power of worshipping your Phallus, O great lord. This is what I have chosen. O you three-eyed (god), listen to this: My noble disciple is without (i.e. does not care for) what should and what should not be given up. With his eyes he does not see what should be seen with a feeling of mineness. With his nose he does not smell what is fit for being smelt; nor (does

he give) what is fit to be given, or (does not do) any other similar act. Knowing this he did like that. The very illustrious meditating saint, of a figure resembling that of a mad man, and known as Śaṅkarātman did like that. Nobody would prohibit him; nobody would harm him. O god, grant me this, and also the deathlessness of these.

The lord said:

141-142a. May they live till the end of the kalpa; then let them enjoy salvation. For a moment we shall stay in this extensive, specially made and auspicious abode of you. Then we shall go home.

Gautama said:

142b-147a. O lord, I am asking for an improper thing. A suppliant does not notice a blemish. O lord of gods, if you like, give me what cannot be obtained by Brahmā and others.

Then the lord looked at Viṣṇu and seized Viṣṇu's hand. Sadāśiva, having laughed, said to him whose eyes were like lotuses: "O Govinda, you are thin-bellied. What food should be offered to you? Or get in and as in your own house eat (whatever food you choose). Or go to the house of Pārvatī who will fill your belly." Speaking thus, the lord held his hand and went to a secluded corner. And as told before, he said to Nandin, the door-keeper. He told Gautama the subsequent words of Viṣṇu.

Sadāśiva said:

147b-161. O sage, procure food for all of us. We desire to eat (food).

Saying so Śaṅkara went to a secluded place with Viṣṇu. Having got on a soft bed, the excellent deities lay there. Having talked to each other, both of them got up. The two excellent gods went to the bank of Gaṅgā, and bathed (in) deep (water). They drank water from each other's hands. Then Viṣṇu and Śiva quickly splashed water (on each other). Then Śaṁkara, scattered lotus-filaments held in the hollow of his hands over

Viṣṇu's face having eyes like fully blown lotuses. Keśava closed his eyes when the filaments fell (on his face). In the meanwhile, Śiva mounted upon the shoulder of Viṣṇu and holding with his hands Viṣṇu's hand, plunged him (into water). Viṣṇu who was (thus) repeatedly troubled by being plunged, delicately put down Śiva. He dragged him by seizing his feet and whirled him round. (Śiva) struck on the chest of Viṣṇu and dropped him down. Then Viṣṇu who had got up, took water in the hollow of his hands, and scattered it over Śambhu. Then Hara (i.e. Śiva) scattered it over Viṣṇu. Thus they sported in water. The group of sages also had their matted hair dishevelled in the flurry of water-sport. Then due to the confusion, they tied the matted hair with others' matted hair; and the excellent sages, strong or weak, drew (the matted hair). They caused others to fall, and cried and wept also. When such confusion started and took place in the water, Nārada danced and cried in the sky. Playing upon the musical instrument—his charming lute—he loudly sang a song. With a charming song, he sang in ten modes.

162-171a. Śaṁkara, Lokabhāvana (literally, the creator of the world), heard that sweet song; and he himself gradually began to sing sweetly. When the lord of gods himself sang the mingled auspicious Kaiśikī (veriety of the dramatic style), Nārada danced and sang indistinctly. Taking up a firm note having all (good) characteristics and endowed with the nectar of the flow of the excellence (of his voice) he connected it with that song; and Viṣṇu beat the drum with his hands. The four-faced (Brahmā) had a depression, and Tumbura became garrulous. Gautama and others quietly sang in protracted tones. When the lord of monkeys—Hanūmat—sang a sweet song, the wearied became glad; the weak became strong. All of them, having just despised their own songs, got confused. All the gods, the hosts of sages and the demons became silent. Only that Hanūmat sang, and all others were listeners. In the mid-day when the time for meal came, Śiva, listening to the song, took a couple of silken garments. Viṣṇu, (took) a couple of yellow garments, and Brahmā a red one. Then performing rites befitting themselves, and (prescribed to be performed at) that time, all the deities, mounting on their own vehicles, went out.

171b-184a. But the great lord (i.e. Śiva) who loved music, said to the lord of monkeys: "O monkey, you are ordered by me. Be fearless and mount upon the bull (i.e. Nandin), and facing me, sing all songs." Then the best of the monkeys said to the revered great god: "The power to mount upon the bull is only yours. None else has it. O lord by mounting upon your vehicle, I shall be a sinner. O lord of gods, just mount upon me. I (shall be) a bird—Śiva's vehicle. I shall sing facing you. See". Then the lord got upon Hanūmat as on his own bull. When the god Śaṁkara got upon the head and neck of Hanūmat, he cut his skin, and having turned his face, sang as before. Śambhu, listening to the nectar-like (sweet) song, went to Gautama's house. All the hosts of gods and sages and the demons came there. At the time of the meal, Gautama honoured them. When Hanūmat sang, everything like the household utensils made from dry wood increased (i.e. put forth shoots). At the time of his singing the eyes of all stood (rivetted) as in a picture. With his two hands (Hanūmat) held the feet of the lord. He (i.e. the lord) was having (on his person) all ornaments. He had a pleased form. He was young. He was praised by the gods with their hands well-folded on the slender waist. Having held Hanūmat's head with his hands, Śiva turned it to the east. He put one of his feet on the hollow of the hands of Hanūmat, seated in the Padmāsana posture, and the other into his mouth, and the lord affectionately and gently seized Hanūmat's nose with two of his toes. Then he put one foot against his belly, then into his circular navel and the other one into the hollow of his hands. Then Śaṁkara, seized his head, bent it, touched his back with his chin, with (i.e. producing) a sound. Śaṁkara put round Hanūmat's neck a necklace made of pearls.

184b-191a. Then Viṣṇu spoke these words to Śiva: "There is none (else) in the entire universe, since your foot inaccessible to scriptures and gods, remained on the monkey's body. Your foot is not made manifest (even) by all Upaniṣads. The monkey is fully united with it. Your foot is (i.e. your feet are) not (reached) through the means like restraints etc. and deep meditation. The power is spotless in Hanūmat, the lotus of the heart of a great meditating sage. (Even) best sages, after having practised difficult penance for thousands of crores of years, do

not know your form, then how (can they reach) your foot (i.e. feet)? Oh! wonderful is the luck (of the monkey), that the unsteady beast, the monkey, holds the couple of your feet not capable (of being conceived) in their hearts by meditating sages. For a thousand years every day, I devoutly worshipped the foot (i.e. the feet) of the lord. But you did not manifest it (i.e. them) to me; (and) there is a talk among people that Viṣṇu is dear to Śambhu. The monkey (alone) is dear to Śambhu like that; I do not have luck like that."

Sadāśiva said:

191b-197a. O revered Viṣṇu, none else is so dear to me as you, or Pārvatī is (dear to me) like you. None else is (dear) to me.

Then saluting the great god, Gautama respectfully said: "O you immeasurable one, O god, O you treasure of pity, come along. The mid-day has passed. It is time for meal for all." Then the mighty great god (i.e. Śiva) sipped water, and along with Viṣṇu, entered Gautama's house, and started eating food. Śiva who was adorned with jewelled rings, anklets, silken garment, a girdle (bright) like lightning, many necklaces, (many) golden ornaments put around the neck, a sacred thread, upper garments, with jewelled rings that were hanging and with excellent, ornamented hair, with the besmearing of pañcāṅga and sandal, with armlets, with bracelets and rings, sat on an excellent seat; and the god seated Viṣṇu, so as to face himself, on an excellent seat.

197b-199. The two excellent gods, Viṣṇu and Śiva were seated facing each other. Gautama too gave them golden vessels. The sage prepared food of thirty varieties, excellent sweetened milk of four kinds, two hundred (varieties of) well cooked food, three hundred (varieties) of the mixture of uncooked and cooked (food); so also the sage prepared food from good bulbs and vegetables. Vegetables etc. were accompanied by ghee. He offered them (food containing) sugar etc. of twenty-five kinds; so also pomegranates etc., plantains, bunches of grapes, dates, oranges, rose-apples, piyāla-fruits, nuts.

200-206a. Having duly offered these and other articles and

having given apośana[1] (i.e. making the seat for the food), the brāhmaṇa said to them: "(Please) eat." When all of them were eating, Gautama himself took a fan made of very fine cloth and fanned Śiva and Viṣṇu. Then the great god desired to indulge into jest. (He said:) "O Viṣṇu, look at Hanūmat. (See) how the monkey is eating (food)." When Viṣṇu was looking at the monkey, the great god (i.e. Śiva), even when the hosts of sages were observing, threw a cake into Viṣṇu's dish. He also gave Hanūmat sweetened milk etc. left over by him. (Hanūmat said to him:) "O lord, what is left over is not to be eaten according to your statement." (Śiva said:) "Offering of cooked food to me is not proper. The cooked food, so also leaves, flowers, fruits offered to me should be thrown into a well only. Due to your words an article is not enjoyed; and an article is eaten only due to your favour."

Sadāśiva said:

206b-208a. When the bāṇa-liṅga, self-born and bright like the moon remains, the eating of the cooked articles of food of (i.e. offered to) Śambhu should be known to be like the Cāndrāyaṇa (vow). This is now the time for eating. It would be tasteless due to (our resorting to) other tales. I shall tell you after we have eaten. Eat the food without any doubt.

208b-212. Then the sage performed the rite of (sprinkling) water (indicating commencement of the meal). He filled the pitchers reddish, very glossy and fine, with all their parts washed in many ways and dried; with water from lakes, rubbed with seeds and cleaned. He covered the new altar on the sandy bank of the river with spotless, whiter, fine pieces of cloth, and put on them pitchers full of water. In them he should put yellow orpiment, nut-meg, kaṅkola, musk-powder, sandal, and under the layer he should put a garland white like the moon-rays. After having cleaned the pitcher with water and cloth, he should have a knot like a peacock's tail; then should put a garland of bakula and pāṭala flowers.

213-220a. He should keep the pitchers in a place where

1. Apośana—The act of making an upastaraṇa (seat) and apidhāna (covering) for the food eaten.

there is no sun and which has gentle breezes and should be fanned with subtle fans. O king, then he should also sprinkle the goad. Having consecrated well-controlled men or women or their daughters who have bathed and put on washed garments, he should put the sweet, tawny exuberance, thick, profuse sandal. Having applied it to the armpit, neck, he should apply jāpyaka to his head, and apply pañcagandha. Their good hair should have flowers tied to it. Their faces should be good and should be very clean. Such women only whose bodies have saffron applied to them, are proper. So also young women adorned with ornaments. He should offer food through these women or men. They also should, at the time of offering, keep the pitcher covered with fine and small (piece of) cloth in their left hand, and looking into it, unbinding it which is put on a thread, should cause water to be given.

220b-226. Thus the sage Gautama honoured them. When all the noble ones of them like Śiva and others had eaten, had washed their feet and hands, and had rubbed perfumes to their hands, the god of gods, Śiva, was seated on his seat. The gods along with the sages were seated on the lower seats. In the jewelled pots were kept pieces of nuts after covering them after having fumigated them. They were angle-less, round, big, small and even thin. Then Gautama, having cleaned white leaves and put powder of camphor-pieces on them, offered it to Śaṅkara (saying) "O god, accept the tāmbūla." When the sage said these words, (he said to Hanūmat:) "O monkey, take the tāmbūla, give me the pieces." The monkey said: "O great lord, I have no purity. How can purity come to a monkey after his having eaten fruits?"

Sadāśiva said:

227-230. Everything would be purified by my words. Due to my words poison becomes nectar. All Vedas are due to my words. Deities are due to my words. Knowledge of religion is due to my words. Salvation is said to be due to my words. Purāṇas, sacred texts and the codes of law are due to my words. Therefore, take the tāmbūla and give me the good pieces.

The monkey took the tāmbūla with the nut-pieces with his

left hand. (Then) from that he took the leaves and gave the nut-pieces (to Śiva). Śiva ate the camphor after taking it when it was given.

231-235a. When the god had the tāmbūla, Pārvatī holding the hands of Jayā and Vijayā, came to the sage's house from the Mandara mountain. Then, having saluted the feet of the god, she hung down her face in modesty. Lifting her face, the three-eyed god (Śiva) said these (words): "O you most respectable lady among gods, I have offended you. I have eaten without you. So also listen to (other things), O beautiful lady. Having kept you in my abode, without god of gods, and free from all bonds, I have committed a great sin. O you great goddess, (please) forgive (me), and giving up your anger, look (at me)."

235b-237a. She, who was thus addressed, did not speak, and went out with Arundhatī. Coming to know that she was going out, the sage (Gautama) saluted her (prostrating before her) like a staff. Beginning with that a man should salute the great god (prostrating before him) like a staff and praise him. Pārvatī said (to Gautama): "O Gautama, what do you desire?"

Gautama said:

237b-238a. O goddess, I am fortunate. If a boon is to be given to me (by you then), O illustrious one, now take food in my abode.

The goddess said:

238b-243. O sage, I shall eat in your house if I am permitted by Śaṅkara.

The brāhmaṇa Gautama went to the god and securing his permission, again went (to Pārvatī). He fed goddess Pārvatī and Arundhatī also. Then Pārvatī, after having eaten and with all perfumes and ornaments went along with hundreds of maiden-followers to Śiva. Then Śaṁkara said to the goddess: "Go to Gautama's abode. After having offered my sandhyā prayer I shall again come to (Gautama's) abode." When told like this, the goddess went to Gautama's abode. All (gods and sages) desiring to offer their sandhyā prayers went out. All of them, Maheśa and others offered their sandhyā prayers on the

bank (of the river). Then Śiva facing the north and going through the nyāsa muttered the prayers.

244-247a. Then Viṣṇu, of a great lustre, said these (words) to Śiva: "Which (prayer) will you, who are saluted by all, are worshipped by all, invoked in all sacrifices, mutter? All, having folded their palms so as to form a hollow, wait upon you only. To whom have you, O lord of gods, folded your palms (in obeisance)? O great god, you are the giver of the fruit of such religious acts as salutation. Tell (me) who gives you fruit, who is saluted by you, who is superior to you."

Śaṅkara said:

247b-254. O Viṣṇu, I am not meditating upon anyone. I am not saluting anything. O Viṣṇu, I am not waiting upon anyone. I shall not mutter any prayer here; but O Viṣṇu, I have to exhibit (like) this for leading the unbelievers to activity. Otherwise they will be sinners. Therefore, for obliging the world, I have done all this.

Saying. "Yes", Viṣṇu then saluted him and remained (there). Then all the hosts of gods and sages reached Gautama's house and worshipped Pinākin (i.e. the Pināka-holder), the god of gods, O best of the Raghus, the god (i.e. Śiva) remained singing with Hanūmat. At that time they all muttered the five-syllabled great lore. Śiva, seizing the hand of Hanūmat, went near the goddess (Pārvatī). The divine couple sat on the same couch. That Hanūmat remained singing. So also Tumbura and Nārada. The great lord indulged into many kinds of sports. Calling Pārvatī, the lord said these words to her:

Śrī Sadāśiva said:

255-259a. I shall arrange your braid. O auspicious one, come before me.

The goddess said: "It is not proper for the husband to serve his wife. When my hair is dressed by you, another calamity may befall. O god, all the desired facts (may) not accrue on dressing (my) hair(?). When the (hair) is tied, the cleaning of the shoulders will have to be done; so also the cleaning of (i.e. removing of)

the hair, flowers adhering to my back (will have to be done). When this takes place (i.e. when you do this), if the noble ones would come, what reply would you saluted by gods and others, have? O supreme lord, if they do not come, my fear will come to an end."

259b-264. Śaṅkara drew her who was talking like this, (near him) and putting her on his lap, untied her braid of hair, separated the hair with his hands, and spread them with his nails. He put on her hair the garland of pārijāta flowers given by Viṣṇu, tied her braid, and also put on the garland (that he had) in his hand. Taking the garland of jasmine flowers he tied her hair. The great god also put the garland of flowers given by Brahmā. He also made Pārvatī put on a pair of garments having unidentifiable fragrance. Then the great lord cleaned (i.e. removed the hair etc. from) her shoulders and back. The wearing garment of the goddess, with the tie loosened, had gone down. The god, saying, "What is this?" tied the knot of the wearing garment. "I am ardently looking for your nose-ornament."

265-266. Saying so, he took a bright pearl. The pearl was bright due to its contact with turmeric. (He said to her:) "Put on this pearl dear to me and you."

Pārvatī said:

267-270. O Śambhu, your abode is rich with all articles. I have already known all the articles. Oh, due to superior and other ornaments the wealth is known. Your head is decorated with string of the heads of brāhmaṇas; you also have the Naraka-string as the ornament of your chest. The poisonous Śeṣa and Vāsuki are your bracelets. The quarters are your two garments. Your matted hair is your (beautiful) hair. The sacred ash is the unguent to your body. The great bull is your vehicle; and your pedigree and your family are already known! Your parents are not known. Your body has a deformed eye.

271-277a. To Pārvatī who was speaking like this, Viṣṇu who was very angry, said: "O goddess, why are you censuring the god of gods, the lord of the world? O good lady, I shall abandon my dear life. Indeed this is your lack of restraint. Our vow is to die where the censure of the god is (undertaken),

O auspicious lady." Saying so, Viṣṇu proceeded to cut off his head with his nails. Śiva seized his hand, and said: "Do not do this rash act. All the words of (i.e. uttered by) Pārvatī are dear to me, (though) they are not dear to (i.e. liked by) you. O Viṣṇu, what is desired to be done (by you) is not liked by me." Saying 'Yes' the revered Viṣṇu remained silent. Then Hanūmat respectfully said these words to the god: "I desire to carry out my vow of worship without a desire. I would (therefore) go to worship (my desired deity). Please permit me."

Śaṅkara said:

277b-279a. Whose worship (i.e. to worship whom are you going)? Where will the worship (be done)? What flowers (will you use)? What leaves (will you use?) Tell (all that to me). Who is your preceptor? Which is the hymn (you will employ)? How will the worship (be done)?

When the god was speaking like this, Hanūmat trembled very much. With his entire body shaking, he started praising (Śiva):

Hanūmat said:

279b-286a. Salutation to the great god Śiva of an immeasurable form. Salutation to the meditating sage, the prop of abstract meditation and to the preceptor of the meditating sages. Salutation to him who is known (only) by the meditating sages, to the god, and to the lord of the wise. Salutation to you, the lord of the Vedas; salutation to you, the lord of gods. Salutation (to you who are) meditation, who are understood by meditation, to the preceptor of creators. Salutation to the wise, to one who is understood by the wise, to the lord of the earth etc. I am your servant—with these and other words salutation to the treasure of the Vedic words. Salutation to you who is to be thought of with (the utterance of such) words as 'stretch out'. O you eight-formed[1] one, salutation to you. Salutation to the lord of beings.

1. Aṣṭamūrti—For the eight forms of Śiva, see verse 373 of this chapter.

To Tryambaka (i.e. having three eyes), to Trinetra (i.e. the three-eyed one), salutation to you having the Sun and the Moon as your eyes. Salutation to you, to whom the excellent bhṛṅga-rāja, and dhattūra and flowers of droṇa are dear, to whom big nuts, punnāga, campaka etc. are dear. Salutation to you; my repeated salutations to you.

Then Śiva said to Viśṇu: "Do not be afraid. Tell me the whole (thing)."

Hanūmat said:

286b-294. With one's body dusted with the sacred ash one should worship Śiva's Phallus with flowers procured by day, and even now remaining (fresh) like that. O god, I shall respectfully narrate to you the auspicious rite of Śiva's worship. When evening has come, a man should bathe without (making) his head (wet). Then the most wise man should put on a washed garment and sip water twice. Then having taken sacred ash he should bathe in honour of Agni. Then muttering (a hymn) with Om eight times, or with the five-syllabled hymn or with any other name, he, with darbhas in his hand, should collect the sacred ash consecrated seven times. Saying '*Īśānaḥ sarva-vidyānām*' he should drop the ash on his head. He should sprinkle (i.e. apply) the ash over his face by saying '*Tat puruṣāya vidmahe*'. He should put on (i.e. apply to) his chest the sacred ash (after saying:) '*Aghorebhyaḥ atha ghorebhyaḥ.*' He should apply it to the private parts (of his body) saying '*Vāma-devāya namaḥ.*' He should throw on (i.e. apply to) his feet the sacred ash after saying '*Sadyojātam prapadyāmi.*' The wise one should dust his entire body with the sacred ash, with the utterance of *Om*. The excellent rite of bathing etc. is prescribed for the (first) three castes. I shall tell (you) about the rite for the śūdras and others as told by (my) preceptor.

295-304. Uttering the word *Śiva* the wise one should consecrate the sacred ash. Taking it seven times, he should put it on (i.e. apply it to) his head, (uttering:) 'To Śiva'. It is said that (he should put the sacred ash) into his mouth (afther uttering

the word *Śaṅkarāya* (i.e. to Śankara). He should put it on his chest after saying 'To the omniscient one'. Uttering the words *Salutation to Sthāṇu* (he should apply the sacred ash) to the private parts (of his body). Saying 'to Svayambhū' he should apply it to his feet. Then the sacred ash is purer. It is said that the entire body should be dusted with the sacred ash after uttering *Namaḥ Śivāya*. (Then) he should, having washed his hands and having sipped water, be composed. In the absence of darbhas gold should be (used). In its absence cow's hair (should be used). In its absence dūrvā-grass should be (used). In its absence silver should be used. Having offered the sandhyā prayer and having muttered (the names) of the goddess, he should go to the temple of the deity. The altar for the deity or a raised platform for the deity should be pure and made of clay. It should have the arrangements of lotuses etc. on it. It should be painted with four colours or with white colour only. (Then he should arrange) beautiful lotuses, Svastika-figures, blue lotuses etc., a mace, a conch, a trident and so also a drum; the five shrines as told by Śiva, so also the Phallus of Śiva, the tree yielding all fruits, kulaka, kolaka; it should have six angles, three angles or even nine angles. The swing should have twelve angles, so also wooden sandals and fans (should be kept).

305-309. The intelligent man should also fashion with powders (the images of) Viṣṇu, Brahmā etc. on the altar; or the wise one should arrange these where the worship of the deity would take place. The best (materials of worship are those) that are fashioned by his own hands. The mediocre are those that are purchased. Lowest are those that are begged; and the meanest are those that are (secured) forcibly. Whatever is secured with force, whether proper or improper, is fruitless. He should do everything properly, with red rice, japā flowers, kalamā rice, white or red rice, or ears just coming out from the paddy plants, according to the proper order, and with placing lotuses etc. which are said to be the best, the mediocre and the lowest. He should face the north or the east.

310-316. I shall tell (you) about the seat as I have seen it or heard about it. It should be made of silk, hide, which are like cloth, wooden or of palm-leaves; or of wool, gold, silver, and

copper or made of dry (cakes of) cowdung. He should make the seat (also) of the hide of tiger, ruru deer, antelope or deer. (Thus the seat) made of hide should be known to be of four kinds; so also it should be of bandhujīva (a kind of tree) as (anyone of of these) is available. He should sit in the padmāsana posture, or in the svastika posture. He should be seated with darbhas and with the sacred ash (applied to his body); he should control his breath and his speech. He till then is of the form of the deity. In the end he should practise meditation. He should meditate upon Śiva of a subtle body remaining at the end of the tuft of hair on the crown of the head (and of the measure of) twelve fingers, (Śiva) moving within (the bodies of) beings, in the cave (of the heart) and in all forms. (He should meditate upon Śiva) who is having all ornaments, who is endowed with qualities like (being) small. He should keep him in his heart; he should fill his (own) body by means of his parvasion.

317-322. Due to that brilliance the sin in the body perishes as gold becomes crimson or white due to its contact with mercury. Having fashioned the pure seat covered with twelve leaves (or eight or three leaves), he should place the Phallus there. Then he should think of Śiva remaining in the cave (of the heart as placed) in the Phallus. Into the pitcher that is cleaned, he should put water which is cleaned, perfumed with fragrances and containing fragrant flowers, and which is consecrated with (the sacred syllable) *Om*. Restraining the breath and (the utterance of) *Om* are not prescribed in the case of śūdras. In place of the restraint of the breath (they should have) meditation and (in place of) consecration with *Om*, (they should utter the word) *Śīva*. He should place near him the materials of worship like sandal, sacred rice-grains etc.; and then he will make a solemn vow: 'To please Śiva only, I shall worship Śiva.'

323-328. Having made a solemn vow like this, he should then invoke (the deity) etc., till (the deity is given) a bath. Then he should give bath (to the deity) with the hymn *Namaste* etc. and according to the rite of the Śatarudriya. A stream (of water) that is unbroken is called *muktidhārā*. He who bathes the deity with that (i.e. muktidhārā) for a month, while muttering (the names of) Rudra in a low voice, once, thrice, five times, seven or nine times or eleven times (is meritorious). This (bath) should

be known as *muktisnāna*; (when continued) for a month, it gives salvation. The bath (should be given) with (the accompaniment) of the Śaiva lore (i.e. hymn) or merely with (the utterance of) *Om*; or with clay pot and pieces of coconuts, with bell-metal, pearls, or string of flowers. Thus he should bathe the lord with materials as told and as are available.

329-343a. I shall tell (you about) the rite of the horn, and about how it would be fit for the bath (to be given with). Having cleansed it before and after, he should make a very glossy and small peg, and should cut it somehow. With (water from) the bucket placed at a low region near the door and with darbhas he should bathe the deity. Thus is said to be the water-form of the gavaya-horn. At the door having joints, he should fashion a staff, bent and of the shape of a peg; at the place of the plank he should fashion a goblet having even number of holes with a staff. There only he should cause to fall (the water) remaining in the pitcher (placed in) a machine above. He should make it fall with the other (i.e. the right) or with just the left hand. He is said to have put the muktidhārā. It is pure and destroys sins. Having thus installed the (representation of) the lord of gods, he should bathe it with the five products of a cow or with five sweet things, or with three sweet things.[1] Having adorned the deity with decorations and having again bathed the great lord, he should offer cold (water etc.). (Then) he should bring a piece of cloth, a sacred thread, pañcagandha, camphor, agaru (sandal), or (ordinary) sandal. Or both should be mixed. (Then) he should worship Śiva's Phallus. The entire seat may be full (i.e. fully made) of sandal, or according to his real wealth. The worship (should be offered) silently; he should offer seasonal flowers, like śrīpatra, sarala, according to his capacity, and unbroken. The incense of many materials, or similarly guggula (a fragrant resin) only along with ghee (made from the milk) of a cow are recommended for a full incense. He should offer incense according to his capacity, so also lamps burning with the ghee (made from the milk) of a cow, or he should offer lamps burning merely with ghee, and other offerings. He should offer flowers procured according to his

1. Pañcāmṛta—The collection of five sweet things used in worshipping deities. They are: milk, sugar, ghee, curd and honey.

capacity. Then he should respectfully offer (water for) washing the mouth and tāmbūla. He should go round and salute (the deity). Thus the worship is accomplished. Then the five constituents of singing (should be gone through).

343b-347. They are: Songs, instrumental music, (recital of) a Purāṇa, dancing and mirthful talk. He should also wave the light (before the deity), offer a cavity-ful of flowers and everything. He should apologise to the deity, then dismiss the deity; this is said to be an upacāra[1]. Similarly, ornaments, umbrellas, chowries, fans, Śiva's sacred thread and service to him are said to be six upacāras. He who would worship Śiva with thirtytwo upacāras in a day, will certainly have all his sins destroyed. The worship with thirtytwo upacāras is the best.

Sadāśiva said:

348-349a. O best among the monkeys, it is like this. I shall tell you about the worship. The couple of my feet are fit to be worshipped. Be the worshipper of all. Having thus propitiated the Phallus, you propitiate me.

Hanūmat said:

349b-354. My preceptor has certainly enjoined on me the Phallus-worship only. O god, I shall do it first; then I shall worship your feet.

Having just spoken like this, he saluted the lord, and became (engaged) in the worship of Śiva's Phallus. He should go to (i.e. he went to) the bank of a lake and having made a sandy altar, should arrange a seat made of palm-leaves. Having washed his hands and feet, and having sipped water, he became composed. He bathed with (i.e. applied) sacred ash; and again having sipped water, he controlled his speech. On the altar for the deity he put lotuses; then the monkey who had taken the posture called padmāsana, made a very beautiful (seat) of the palm-leaves. Having, along with the nyāsas, restrained his breath, he, endowed with pure meditation, saluted the great god and muttered (his names) thereafter.

355-362a. Then he also made an effort to worship the god.

1. Upacāra=service; worship; act of worship; article of worship.

He brought pure water in a couple of the hollows of palāśa-leaves. Placing the fire, to the accompaniment of three hymns, which was in the pitcher on the head, he made invocation etc. up to the bath only. Then he took (the representation of) the god in the hollow made by the palms of his hands to bathe him. Having observed, the monkey did not see the god and the seat. Seeing only the Phallus in his hand, he was full of fear. The great meditating sage said (thought) this: 'What sin have I committed so that (only) this Śiva-Phallus without the seat remains in my hand? I shall certainly die today if the seat does not come (back). I shall mutter the Rudra(-hymn); then the great god will come.' Thus having resolved in his mind, he muttered the Śatarudriya (hymn). Even then the great god did not come (there). Then the lord of the monkeys dropped Rudra on the ground. Vīrabhadra came (there). "O devotee, why do you weep? Tell me the cause of your weeping."

Hanūmat said:

362b. This Phallus is without the seat. See the heap of my sins.

Vīrabhadra said:

363-367. If the seat does not come to the Phallus, do not do a rash act. I shall burn the world if the seat does not come (back). See and show me the Phallus. (Let me see,) if Vīrabhadra saw the Phallus and (noted that) the seat had not come back, he desired to burn all the worlds.

He threw fire on the ground; in a moment the earth burnt at that time. Then he burnt the seven nether worlds, and again set out to lift them. He burnt the five upper worlds, the abodes of the people. Taking (out) with his nail the citron-like fire produced in his eye on his forehead, the lord put it on the palm of his hand.

368-375. If the seat would not come, then certainly the worlds are burnt. The brave Vīrabhadra knew (that the seat) did not come (back). The noble ones like Sanaka, having come to know (about this incident) through deep meditation, came (there). The brāhmaṇas came to the excellent hermitage of Gautama, but did not see the origin of gods (i.e. Śiva) though

he was there. They praised (him) with eulogies from all the Vedas: 'Salutation to that god of gods; salutation to that (god of) pure lustre and inconceivable form. Salutation to the lord of gods; salutation to the pure one concealed by the Vedas. Salutation to Śiva, the first god; salutation to (Śiva) having a snake as his sacred thread. Salutation to him who supports everything with the drops of the three (Vedas)—the heap of the joy of the gods. Our repeated salutation to that Śaṅkara whose eight forms are: earth, air, ether, water, moon, fire, sun and soul also, and who is known (only) through knowledge.' Having heard this praise, Śiva, who had given (back) to Bhaga his eyes, said to Viṣṇu: "Go and bring here those brāhmaṇas." They were brought there by Viṣṇu. They bowed before the god. Śaṅkara spoke (these) words to them: "Why have you come (here)?"

The sages said:

376. O god, heaps of the ashes of the twelve worlds (burnt by Vīrabhadra) are seen. This forest alone remains. (Please) note the destruction of the worlds.

Sadāśiva said:

377. We have a doubt about the burning of the five worlds that are above (the earth). How is there the shower of (burning) charcoals? Or how (i.e. due to what) is the great sound?

The sages said:

378-388. Now we have fear from Vīrabhadra. He alone, like one desirous to drink, has dropped the shower of charcoals.

Then the god called Vīrabhadra and said to him: "O Vīra, what is (this)?" Vīra (said:) "This was done due to the loss of the seat of the Śiva-Phallus of Hanūmat. To know the heart of the monkey, I did this great (deed)." Then the god, treasure of kindness, made (everything) as before. The supreme lord made all the worlds burnt (by Vīrabhadra) as beautiful as before. Then the universal soul (i.e. Śiva) said to Vīrabhadra; Śiva embraced him, smelt him on the head and gave him a tāmbūla. Then Hanūmat performed the worship of the lord. He then said to a gandharva

having a lute and wandering in the forest, these (words:) "Give the lute to me." (The gandharva said:) "I shall not part with my lute. It is (dear to me) like my (own) life." The lord of the monkeys said: "The lute is (dear to me) like my own life." Then when by the stroke of his fist the gandharva fell down, he took the great lute endowed with notes and strings, and made it joined with a bottle-gourd resembling the form of a royal tree. Putting it on his chest, he came singing in the vicinity of Śiva. He worshipped the feet of the god with pure flowers of bṛhatī. Then the lord gave him a boon and (a span of) life till (the end of) the kalpa. He also gave him another (boon)—capacity to cross the ocean.

389-395a. He with his body well adorned with all decorations, having lessened the brightness of the gods with his own brilliance, of a pleasing form and an auspicious body, honoured all gods. The great god (i.e. Śiva) took a yellow pair of washed garments (and said to Viṣṇu): "O god Viṣṇu, you take this auspicious (pair)." The giver of wealth gave a red garment to Brahmā, and gave a good pair to (each of) all the gods, sages, demons etc. Rāma too, hearing this, offered a pair to Śambhu, so also a very subtle, very costly golden ornament. Then Rāghava, seated comfortably with his ministers and family-priest, also with hosts of many sages, kings and monkeys, after having eaten (food), on the bank of Gautamī, said to Śambhu who knew the essential nature of the Purāṇas: "You alone know the hundred secrets of all the ways of life. O brāhmaṇa, tell me what is the peculiarity of which yuga."

Śambhu said:

395b-401. In Kṛta (yuga) meditation alone is the best. In Tretā (yuga) sacrifice alone (is the best). In Dvāpara (yuga) worship (is the best). In Kali (yuga) charity, a recital of Viṣṇu's name (are the best). Everything is recommended everywhere, but not meditation in Kaliyuga. Due to the minds of men being in difficulty, being deluded, O lord, they do not have a firm mind in religious rites, in the Vedas and in the codes of law (smṛti). So also in sacrifice, in the exclamation of Svadhā (made at the time of offering oblation to a deity), and in listening to the Purāṇas. So also (they do not have a firm mind) in sacrifices,

sacred places and serving the gods; in offering sacrifices to deities, in the duties of their own castes, in remembering god: nowhere (have they a firm mind) in Kaliyuga. Therefore, men are incapable of having religious merit lasting for a long time. Due to the time being short a man is capable of giving (gifts). Therefore, for those who are polluted by Kali, there is no expiation. The destruction of the sins of some takes place due to expiations, not in any other way.

402-411a. All these—one who knows Brahman, one who performs the śrāddha ceremony at Gayā, one who goes to Kāśī—are inferior to him who knows the Purāṇas; so also the listener of a Purāṇa (is inferior to him), O Rāma. The brāhmaṇa who expounds a Purāṇa is superior, due to his explaining the meaning according to yugas, due to his convincing himself and others, and due to his illumining Brahman (or the Vedas). Even the sin committed by him would not stick. Then what about (sin) from another (source)? The Purāṇa would destroy certain other sins. There is no doubt that all the sins of him who believes in the Purāṇas, looks upon the speaker (of the Purāṇas) as his teacher, and upon the giver of the lore of Brahman (or Vedas) as superior to his kinsmen and relatives, perish. The worshipper of the great lord should go to Śrīśaila; the Purāṇa destroys the sin of men in Kaliyuga. O Rāma, I shall tell you an account (that) formerly (took place) in Kaliyuga. Listen to it. There was a brāhmaṇa named Gautama who was destitute of the Vedas. He had two brothers Puṣṭi and Paśu who (also) were destitute of the Vedas. With them (i.e. with their help) he did husbandry, and obtained prosperity. He also gave some wealth and grains to the king. Once he said a few words to the king: "Give me (some) authority. I shall not lose wealth. The two brothers of mine are capable."

The king said:

411b-412a. A brāhmaṇa is qualified for the religious rites as told by the Vedas. The brāhmaṇahood of a brāhmaṇa employed at any other (job) than that perishes.

Gautama said:

412b-415. This is a way of life (followed) in other yugas.

The way of life in Kaliyuga is not like that. O king, behaving like a king is said to be the duty of kings. A brāhmaṇa who is extremely emaciated, is not at a fault if he practises it. Agriculture is the duty of śūdras. A brāhmaṇa is not to pursue it (even) in a calamity. Therefore, I shall live as a kṣatriya; grant me (a few) villages. I like to live as a kṣatriya at other place than this. (I do) not like anything else.

(The king) said, "All right", and gave (a few) villages to the brāhmaṇa.

416-421a. He, the wicked official of the villages, behaved differently. He ate flesh, he drank liquor, he uttered bad words; similarly he approached others' wives; he snatched away the wealth of others; he indulged in gambling; and he, the eater of bad things, ate the flesh of an animal struck with a poisoned weapon. He did not worship the lord of the worlds—Śiva or Viṣṇu. The king, after some time, spoke (to the brāhmaṇa) who behaved badly like this: "O brāhmaṇa, having given up brāhmaṇahood, you have secured śūdrahood (i.e. have become a śūdra). Therefore, I shall dismiss you by my order." "I do not want brāhmaṇahood. The condition of a śūdra is better for me. Without that, even if they are brāhmaṇas, they do not enjoy. Therefore, śūdrahood is better for me. O lord of the earth, I am not able to give up all this."

Śambhu said:

421b-423. When the bad brāhmaṇa spoke like this, the king remained silent. He, equal to a śūdra, ate food with flesh. Once that man of bad behaviour remained in a pavilion on the street. He heard this verse being recited by a brāhmaṇa; and the verse recited by the brāhmaṇa remained in his heart:

424-426. "Those who are greatly devoted to Viṣṇu go to a place higher than the highest. Those who hate the great lord (i.e. Śiva) will not go there." Also on hearing the explanation he said to the public reader of the Purāṇas: "Of what kind is said to be Nārāyaṇa? And how is Maheśvara? What is said to be the great path? How is hatred explained? What is that known to be the highest? What is higher than that?"

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

427-429. That highest is Brahmā's place, whose only characteristic is the manifestation of happiness. Higher than that is Viṣṇu's abode. It is superior to that of Brahmā. That highest place is described as having (the quality of) indestructibility. In it the (supreme) man is Viṣṇu. The lord, O lord, dear one, is the highest. Water, due to the (supreme) man being born in it is called Nara. Nara (i.e. water) is his abode; therefore, he is declared as Nārāyaṇa.

430-431. Those who have a devotion to him are said to be tatparāyaṇa (i.e. devoted to him). He who is the controller of the principles like mahat etc., and whose eyes are the sun, fire, and the moon, and who is the lord of Umā would be (i.e. is) the great god (Śiva). Hatred should be known to be the enmity towards the lord, the highest soul.

Śambhu said:

432-441. In this way the brāhmaṇa who read the Purāṇa, uttered these words. Thinking (about it) he again said: "What would be the fate of (a person) like me?" Then the public reader of the Purāṇas said to him: "Listen, I shall tell (you) about your fate. With all efforts duly take an expiation. Practise religious merit according to your capacity at the proper time and according to the proper rules. Being free from sins, you will then reach an excellent condition. Or being attentive, listen to a Purāṇa every day. Or free from hopes, worship the great god, the trident-holder (Śiva), or Keśava (i.e. Viṣṇu), the god whose eyes are like lotuses and who destroys suffering. Or take to renunciation for good. Be devoted to the knowledge of Brahman. Or go to the lord of Kāśī, and obtain death for securing salvation. Or go to Gayā, and try to offer a śrāddha there. Or mutter every day with respect the Rudra(-hymn); pleasing Rudra, the essence of all the Vedas, and the destroyer of sins. Or go to Śrīśaila, or to Kedāra, if you please. Or practise bath in Māgha every year. What is the use of talking too much in this matter. Always be devoted to piety. (If you do) like this, you will not live in hell, O you mean brāhmaṇa."

Gautama said:

On hearing the Purāṇa from your mouth, I shall do all (this). Also tell me the sacred precepts, the cause of faith and the taboos.

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

442-448a. (These are) prohibited: flesh, liquor, enjoying another's wife, gambling, boasting, harshness, falsehood, deceit, censure of god of gods, reviling preceptors, seniors, gods and expounders of Purāṇas and codes of laws, white egg-plant, living on bottle-gourd, citron, safflower, the rice called lohita, lotus, awl, coconut, pumpkin gourd, kovidāra fruit, cooked oil, human milk, so also milk of a rhinoceros, of a female donkey, the milk of a woman recently delivered, so also of a female goat, of a camel, of a one-hoofed animal, of a deer, sheep and of human beings, so also the milk of a calf-less cow and of one that is in heat, salt that is touched, the juice of coconut in a bell-metal vessel or in a copper vessel, honey in a lead vessel; he should never have butter-milk in a glass-vessel or have flour mixed with curds, smeared with ghee. A burnt offering or a cake offered as an oblation shines in a clay-vessel.

448b-453a. A wise man, desiring auspiciousness, should not serve a stranger in (this) world. The smearing of the inside of a vessel with a powder, or eating therefrom (is prohibited). Similarly eating betel-nut, and crushed (betel-)leaves (is prohibited). The eating of ripe betal-nut brings about a union with worms. So also salt added to milk merely with the hand (is prohibited). In (countries like) Sindhu, Saurāṣṭra, Kamboja, Magadha and Siṁhala milk accompanied by salt does not lead to a sin. In other countries all (kinds of) milk and salts lead to sin. There is a doubt here in case of drinking. What is the use of talking much in this matter? Good men should avoid what is censurable.

Śambhu said:

453b-464. Having heard these words of the magnanimous brāhmaṇa, he went to his own house, and being afflicted thought: 'Even a great man does not know whether death would

come at night or by day. In the other world there may be happiness or unhappiness. In this world there are pleasures and entertainments. The pleasures and pains of the worms and insects and of human beings etc. are separate for each being. The difference in purpose also is well-determined. Even for one being the condition is not of one kind (only). At the time of birth there is great ignorance. In infanthood there is very little knowledge; when the steps stumble (i.e. in early childhood there is little understanding; it is also very little in childhood. In adolescence there is interest in sport; in youth there is a longing for carnal pleasures. When youth has passed there is the desire to secure wealth. In old age there is a desire for enjoyment, but (the old man) is not capable of enjoyment. He suffers from rheum of the eyes, phlegm, saliva, folds, greyness and trembling; the senses are overpowered by asthma, wind, and are defective. He is not able to hold anything, nor does he know anything. He would show (i.e. he shows) his private parts when wives of others are there. He is engaged in scratching his testicles, and is cruel due to the nature of living. He raises his garment, moves his buttocks, and scratches them. Eating (i.e. trying to eat) the mouthful he is not able (to do so) due to phlegm. When there is cough there is wind passing from the anus with a sound. So also the feces come out, and phlegm also comes out. He is rebuked by his daughters-in-law etc. and children laugh with clapping.

465-471. Having given a thought to the going out of the elders he was repeatedly invited for food etc. Having censured the eatables, food etc. and having for a long time condemned the hot (food) he again thought: 'I am a man who has done very bad deeds. How shall I eat? How shall I sleep? How shall I stand? How shall I go? How can I reach the other world (i.e. heaven)?' He was thus always worried. He, not having a thought for the highest one, did not bow down. O Rāma, he went to the house of a brāhmaṇa, well-versed in the Purāṇas. With his face bent down through shame, he said: "What (should) I do (now)?" At that time the brāhmaṇa, the public reader of the Purāṇas, said nothing; knowing that he was a sinner he drove him away through his disciples. Gautama too, going out,

remained outside the house, at the door. To him who was (first) seated on the ground and who somehow reached the brāhmaṇa pondering over the meaning of the Purāṇas, a seat was offered (by the Paurāṇika). He did not occupy it. O Rāma, seated on the ground, he said to (the brāhmaṇa) who knew the Purāṇas: "I shall go through an expiation. Let it be done here only."

The brāhmaṇa said:

472-474a. Narrate fully the sins committed by you.

He too, saying, "I have done no sin", wept, and being extremely afflicted fell on the ground, saying, "how, O dear one, (can I save myself)?" The brāhmaṇa then said to him: "There is no expiation if a major sin is committed three times."

Gautama said:

474b-475a. O noble reader of the Purāṇas, how am I sinful even when I have come to you? If I am sinful even now, then the company of an excellent brāhmaṇa (like you) would be fruitless.

The public reader of the Purāṇas said:

475b-478. In the decision about the expiations of all sacred precepts are the (only) authority. If one would say anything about it then that would not be an expiation. (The expiation) is said to be gone through once, if (the sin) is committed once. For the second (sin) it would be double. For the third (sin) it is said to be triple, and for the fourth (sin) there is no atonement. You have committed many sins. Even the fourth one you have committed deliberately. How am I able to tell an expiation to (a person) like you?

Gautama too said again: "Where should I go now?"

479-487. O Rāma, the brāhmaṇa, the public reader of the Purāṇas, remained quiet. Gautama too went to the great Śrīśaila. Then, having bathed in the river, and having seen the lord Mallikārjuna, and having observed three fasts (i.e. having fasted for three days), he had Śivarātri (i.e. it was the day of Śivarātri). He who was very much grieved, observed the fourth

fast; he also broke his fast by (eating) fruits and barks of trees on the new-moon day. Then the brāhmaṇa went round Śrī-śaila, keeping it to his right. He, extremely emaciated due to worry and heaving, then went to the temple. 'How will I, remaining silent, accomplish freedom from sins? Which is my very great, infinite sin that is inconceivable? (Even) having heard (about my sins) nobody would say to me—Go through an expiation. But on hearing some Purāṇa, it will be known.' Thinking like this, he said to (the brāhmaṇa) who knew the Purāṇas: "O dear one, may the revered one expound one Purāṇa to me. Quickly make me go through the sacraments like the one performed at the time of birth; I shall listen to the Purāṇa after becoming a twice-born; thereafter, I (shall) go through an expiation. If a Purāṇa is narrated to me, it will be helpful to me. So I determining the meaning of the Purāṇa shall do (whatever) is possible."

The public reader of Purāṇas said:

488-489a. I shall duly narrate the Purāṇa destroying sins to you, according to my knowledge (of it), according to my capacity, as uprightly as possible and according to the proper rules. Which Purāṇa do you desire (to hear)? I shall narrate that only.

Gautama said:

489b-490a. Tell me which Purāṇa should be said to be liked by all, and hearing which there would be no difference felt between Viṣṇu and Śiva.

The public reader of Purāṇas said:

490b-494. That Purāṇa which is called Kaurma is said to be telling about the non-difference between the two gods. The sin of him who listens to it first, perishes. There would be no danger for him who would be its reader. If a sinner desires to hear it, his wife perishes; moreover, one difficult thing I shall tell (you) and that is the absence of the censure of the listener and the speaker. If the listener has love for the expounder, it becomes manifest through the merit only. When meritorious behaviour which shows (the path to) salvation, is noticed, then the great

god (i.e. Śiva) is pleased, and Viṣṇu gives the desired fruits. He has emancipated his dead ancestors. They obtain the highest state.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTEEN

Reciting and Listening to Purāṇas Is Meritorious

Śrī Rāma said:

1. O best brāhmaṇa, how did (the brāhmaṇa) knowing the Purāṇa explain it to the mean brāhmaṇa to whom heaps of sins had come?

Śambhu said:

2-7. Union takes place in teaching and learning. When they go together, O Rāma, in a year the sin of a sinner goes away. O you descendant of Kakutstha, when the knower (i.e. the reader) of a Purāṇa knows all the essential things, then even repeated heap of sins perishes, as the heap (i.e. column) of smoke perishes when a large fire perishes. A moth is capable of destroying a lamp, (but) not (capable of) destroying fire. As one who frees the mortals seized with the fear of ghosts etc., so a public reader of Purāṇas destroys the sin committed by others. One who knows a spell would send away (the ghost etc.), and not he who is afflicted. Similarly, a public reader of Purāṇas does not receive any sin. One who knows Purāṇas, destroys the sin committed by himself or by others, and even (the fruit of) a very wicked sin.

8-11. One who has discrimination looks equally upon (Śiva) the lord of Pārvatī and upon Viṣṇu. He knows the acts of the world and those that are told in the Vedas; he mutters the Rudra(-hymn); he is very desireless. He is contented; he is calm; he is diligent in work; he is mature; he practises abstract meditation; and is controlled, as your reader of Purāṇas—the

revered sage Vasiṣṭha—is, who has remained by your command in Ayodhyā and has protected the entire earth. The demon rushed to you. At the advice of Śukra the demon came to (attack) you. (He thought:) 'I shall kill him when he is asleep. Otherwise there is no chance.'

12-16. Then the brāhmaṇa Vasiṣṭha, to whom your well-being was dear, knowing this (thought:) 'There is no doubt that the demon will kill Rāma who is asleep and unaware. The demon has obtained a boon from Brahmā. I have to keep him off'. Thinking like this, the brāhmaṇa sage took the army and went out. The sage was unable to kill the demon who was immune to death. Then the great sage himself became a demon and said (these) words: "Why have you come to this forest resorted to by sages?" He said: "The king (i.e. Rāma) kills the demons. I have come to kill him." The sage said: "What have you to do with him, alive or dead? Having eaten my flesh, and having fought with me, go (back)."

The demon said:

17-20a. How can you, a demon, be fit for my food?

Then Vasiṣṭha too, becoming a human being, stood in the sky (i.e. air). He spat on his head and struck him with his fist. He struck the demon. The sage made him flee. The two running (after each other) went to the ocean. At that time, the demon was seized by a crocodile living there. The sage was in Ayodhyā as before.

Śambhu said:

20b-22. Therefore, he who knows a Purāṇa, should do what is agreeable to him. I shall tell you the auspicious manner of listening (to a Purāṇa). On a holy day in the bright half (of a month), when the day and constellation are in union, when there is the (proper) Karaṇa, an auspicious moment, when there is the strength of the planets and stars, when old Jupiter remains with a young, wise Planet (a Purāṇa should be heard).

23-25a. (It should not be heard) in a dark fortnight, on an eclipse-day, or in the vicinity of an atheist. A man should listen to a Purāṇa having the characteristics as stated before.

(He should listen to it) in a pure house, or on a pure altar, or in a place of learning, on the bank of a river, in a temple, in an assembly hall, in a beautiful monastery on the road, or in auspicious halls, O Rāma.

25b-30a. Having himself saluted the best brāhmaṇas, and especially him who knows the Purāṇa, a man should fashion a seat above (all other seats) and superior to all (other seats). He should gently say (to the reader of the Purāṇa): "Come to (this) religious seat." He should declare what is to be done on the day of the commencement of (the recital of) the Purāṇa. Having given the expounder of the Purāṇa auspicious, fine, new garments and ornaments for his hands, neck etc., so also a proper seat, he should honour him with garments etc. After having worshipped Viṣṇu having the complexion like that of the moon and having four hands, and having put on a white garment, with sandal, flowers and sacred grains, and having offered him a tāmbūla, he should, for the removal of all difficulties, reflect upon him, of a pleasing face.

30b-34. Having honoured the members of the assembly, he should then pray to Gaṇeśa. He should worship him with the hymn: *Oṁ namaḥ* etc. (Then should follow) the eulogy of Sarasvatī. The commencement (of the recital) of the Purāṇa should be done in the morning. O Rāma, on the day of commencement three, five or ten auspicious verses (should be read). Double this number (should be read) on the second day. O Rāma, (the reading of) more verses than on the second day is prescribed for the third day. The narration and the hearing should go on without a break on all days. When (proper) arrangement is made, he should give the preceptor, the reader of the Purāṇa, tāmbūla etc. and should also listen to it on the next day.

35-39. The scripture says that every day Purāṇa should be listened to. If a man listens to the Purāṇa as a vow, he undoubtedly goes to that place wherefrom the Purāṇa (has come). There is no doubt that the sin committed on the day would perish, if he who desires to listen to (the recital of) the Purāṇa, has heard even one verse. He who would listen to the Purāṇa like this, would be free from the bond of the sin of a brāhmaṇa's murder; so also from (sins due to) drinking liquor, snatching

gold, and the sin due to (enjoying) his teacher's wife. So also all the other sins which are committed and were formerly committed by men (perish). So also sins committed by the listener and the speaker in this world (perish).

40-49a. In Kaliyuga all brāhmaṇas do not know all things. Therefore, even if the narration is faulty, it gives fruit like the act of charity. Vyāsa, and none else, understood the import of the Purāṇas. I know it especially more than even Vyāsa or even Brahmā. In Kaliyuga, self-study, penance, hymns or oblation do not become so fruitful as listening to Purāṇa (is fruitful). There is no doubt that by listening to each Purāṇa even great sin perishes, as by living on Śrīśaila. Therefore, the knower of Purāṇa is the preceptor. He is venerable to the listeners and destroys (their) sins. There is no preceptor superior to him who would give the highest position. Those preceptors who are regarded as knowers of the hymns and Vedas, are not capable of giving all knowledge. Therefore, they are not teachers. O Rāma, generally goblins who are the ghosts of brāhmaṇas know the Vedic hymns, and not ones who know the Purāṇas. All who are averse to Purāṇas do not see (i.e. know) everything. Therefore, one who knows Purāṇas is a master who destroys sins. His worship is the worship of all. Troubling him is offending all. As among all gifts, gift of knowledge is praised, in the same way the public reader of Purāṇas is blessed; and giving a gift to him gives great fruit.

Rāma said:

49b-50a. What should be given to the public reader of Purāṇas? How much (should be given)? In what way (should it be given)? What kind of Purāṇa should be avoided? What kind of the reader of Purāṇas should be avoided?

Śambhu said:

50b-54a. O Rāma, a man should cause to give (i.e. should give) (the eatables having) the six flavours, food, drinks, oily substances, a house with furniture. All these are sufficient. (If) more (are given) greater fruit (is had). He should also give much wealth, a soft, decorated garment, ornaments of proper value.

(These) he should give according to his capacity. Every day he should give sandal, flowers, or only sandal, or merely a flower, and seasonal fruits also. Similarly he should give him a tāmbūla, and salute him devoutly.

54b-58. At the close (of the reading session) of the Purāṇa, he should give gifts etc. O king, more (things) like land, gold etc. should also be given. Nobody remaining silent (i.e. not giving anything) should listen (to the Purāṇa). The worship (should be) done by the members of the assembly or by one only. At a temple worship should be done by all according to their capacity. O Rāma, a man should honour the knower of Purāṇas at a sacred place. O king, I have already told you the characteristics of a listener. I shall now tell you about the characteristics of a public reader of Purāṇas.

59-60. (A public reader of Purāṇas having the characteristics mentioned below should be avoided:) A man without a family (i.e. one not born in a noble family), a man having a great (i.e. an incurable) disease, a great sinner, a man who is condemned, a man without pure conduct, a man without (i.e. not versed in) Vedas and codes of laws. Also, a man having (i.e. a devotee of) another god, a man having a stinking speech, a defective man or a man having an additional limb, a man who has married a woman having a husband, a thief, one who harms beings and one who is condemned.

61-64. O best king, now I shall tell you about the Purāṇa that should be avoided. (The reader) should recite that Purāṇa which is narrated by the ancient wise ones, or one which is narrated by the great sages, or which the sages like Vyāsa have narrated. He should read the text of the Purāṇa, and should explain it after (properly) thinking over it in any language (like) a regional language, O Rāma. A man would not get the (desired) fruit by listening to a text in the regional language. Whatever the explanation, it is good for the Purāṇa. Therefore, O lord, ask for the Purāṇa which I shall (i.e. should) expound.

Śambhu said:

65-68a. Thus spoke the public reader of the Purāṇa. Gautama also listened to it. He himself gave three garments to

the noble brāhmaṇa. It is learnt by us that he first listened to the Kaurma Purāṇa. He gave the (reader) more gold and bright garments. Then he listened to Laiṅga (Purāṇa), then to Vaiṣṇava and Vāmana also. So also to Pādma, Gāruḍa, and Saura, and Brāhma as well. Thus that Gautama listened to eight Purāṇas.

68b-73. Then he listened to Rāmāyaṇa, and also to Kaurma again. He always muttered the hymn *Śiva Nārāyaṇa.* He died, and went to Brahmā's place. Brahmā honoured that brāhmaṇa who then went to Viṣṇu's heaven. Being honoured by Viṣṇu, he then went to Śiva's abode. That best sage Gautama was honoured by all. I have also narrated the rules for listening to Bhārata. Formerly Vyāsa composed that auspicious book in three years. By listening to it (a man gets religious merit). He who expounds Bhārata should not salute any brāhmaṇa except an excellent meditating sage. He who expounds Bhārata should be honoured by all.

74-77. That brāhmaṇa who every day expounds or would read Mahābhārata, is superior to all, and would emancipate all men. He who expounds one parvan or all parvans or some parvans, becomes free from all sins, and is distinguished in the offering to gods and deceased ancestors. A man should salute that brāhmaṇa only; he should honour that worthy brāhmaṇa only; he should always feed him only; he should offer everything to him. The manner of honouring him at the time of exposition (is:). He should be honoured with garments etc. and a man should honour him according to the rules.

78-81. At the conclusion (of the recital) of Ādiparvan, (a man) should give (the reader) three garments, so also gold according to his capacity. At (the conclusion of the recital of) Sabhāparvan, a pair of garments (should be given). At the conclusion of the recital of Ānuśāsika, Āraṇya and Svargāroha, the same (kind of) honour should be done (to the reader) as is done at the time (of the conclusion of the recital) of the Ādiparvan, O best among men. At (the conclusion of the recital of the) Karṇa, Aśvamedha, Virāṭa, Śalya and Droṇa parvans, three fine, pure garments should be given, or a couple of niṣkas. At (the time of the conclusion of the recital of) other small parvans, he should bring (and give to the reader) two niṣkas.

At (the time of the conclusion of the recital of) Harivaṁśa, he should give the reader three garments with a niṣka.

82-84a. He should give (the reader a piece of) land at the time of the conclusion (of the recital) of the entire Bhārata. A man should worship the reader at the conclusion of the recital of every kāṇḍa, when Rāmāyaṇa is listened to. He should cause to give (i.e. should give) enough land or even gold. The words of the speaker, i.e. the preceptor destroy all sins. O best king, (they lead to) material welfare, religious merit, fulfilment of desires and salvation.

84b-88. All wise men become successful due to their listening to the exposition (of a Purāṇa-text). By (just) one listening (i.e. by listening just once to a Purāṇa) all sins like the murder of a brāhmaṇa perish. Have the men not heard about it on the earth? A man should every day honour the expounder (of the Purāṇa) with (the gifts of) a vehicle, wealth, gold etc. so that the heap of his sins perishes. Even other Purāṇas recited by sages destroy the sins of the listeners, especially of the speaker. The mind of him who would expound all the thirtysix Purāṇas, or listens to them, is never divided.

89-93a. The first Purāṇa is Brāhma; the second is said to be Pādma; the third one is Vaiṣṇava (i.e. Viṣṇu Purāṇa); the fourth one is said to be Śaiva; the fifth is said to be Bhāgavata. Bhaviṣya is said to be the sixth; Nāradīya is declared to be the seventh; Mārkaṇḍeya is said to be the eighth; the ninth is Āgneya (i.e. Agni Purāṇa); Brahmavaivarta is said to be the tenth; then (there are) Laiṅga (i.e. Liṅga Purāṇa), Vāmana, Skānda (i.e. Skanda Purāṇa), Mātsya (i.e. Matsya Purāṇa), Kaurma (i.e. Kūrma Purāṇa); Vārāha (i.e. Varāha Purāṇa) is also said (to be one of the Purāṇas); Gāruḍa (i.e. Garuḍa Purāṇa) is also said (to be a Purāṇa); so also Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa. Thus the wise know the Purāṇas to be eighteen.

93b-97. Similarly I shall tell about the Upapurāṇas hereafter. The first one is Sanatakumāra; after that (comes) Nārasiṁha; the third one is said to be Māṇḍa; then there is Daurvāsasa (i.e. Durvāsas); then Nāradīya; the next is Kāpila; then is Mānava; then is said to be Auśanasa; then comes Brahmāṇḍa; then there is Vāruṇa; there is one called Kālikā; so also there are Māheśa and Sāmba, Saura and Pārāśara, Mārīca, and the

one called Bhārgava; so also Kaumāra. (These) are said to be eighteen Upa(purāṇas). Manu would be (i.e. is) the expounder of the eighteen Purāṇas.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SIXTEEN

Narration of the Rāmāyaṇa of a Former Kalpa

Sūta said:

1-4. Rāma said to the sage: "Perform the rite of the (evening) prayer; this sun is setting; this flock of birds is going to the nests." Having abandoned his conveyance, he himself, desiring to offer his prayers went to the northern direction. Songs were sung by (the gandharvas) Hāhā, Hūhū. His glory was praised by the chief bards. Rāma went to the bank of Gautamī. His pair of feet was washed by Hanūmat (the son of Vāyu). His hand was supported by Jāmbavat. He reached the excellent river Gautamī. Holding kuśa (i.e. darbha) in both his hands that Rāma went to the excellent quarter of Varuṇa (i.e. the Western direction). Having made a respectful offering to the deity according to the proper rite, Rāma who was delighted, muttered (the hymn) in his mind (i.e. silently).

5-8. Rāma, after having solicited Varuṇa, saluted, in due order, Śambhu and Vasiṣṭha. Being blessed by them, he went to the deity (i.e. reflected upon the deity) in his mind, and after his feet were washed by Hanūmat, he offered oblations into the fires. Then, being praised by bards and panegyrists, he set out. The sky was, as it were, smeared with bright rays of the moon, and was, as it were, a canopy everywhere having the flowers of bright stars. Then he went to the palace. The king (i.e. Rāma) went to the assembly-hall fashioned by the old minister and having many seats. Then that Rāma, having made the sage sit, himself occupied the first seat. The groups of monkeys with large bodies were seated around him in (proper) order.

9-13. Seeing the king comfortably seated, that brāhmaṇa Śambhu then said proper words: "O best king, you, honoured by all, remain here. What is the thing in your heart i.e. what is your desire?" The descendant of Raghu, having heard the brāhmaṇa's words, desired to hear a story. His clever words were just then heard by all. "I desire to hear a wonderful tale referring to me or telling about the destruction of the demons." Then the king said this: "The murder of Kumbhakarṇa took place first and Rāvaṇa was killed afterwards. Who is this best brāhmaṇa who, causing ungodliness (to spread) among all the people, narrates it in a different way after having gone to the king's place? Should he be punished or honoured by me?" Then Jāmbavat spoke to this best of the Raghus about the story. "This is not your Rāmāyaṇa (i.e. not your account as told by Vālmīki). This is recognised as prepared (by someone else). O lord, now I shall tell it in detail. Listen to it. It was formerly heard by me from the son of the lotus-born (Brahmā)." Requesting Jāmbavat, Rāmacandra said (these) words:

Śrī Rāma said:

14-18. Narrate that tale of the past. I have curiosity to listen to it. Who propounded it and who knew it?

Then Jāmbavat spoke: Salutation to the Creator (i.e. Brahmā), so also salutation to (Śiva) having the moon as his ornament and to Viṣṇu. Now I shall narrate the ancient Rāmāyaṇa, by listening to which sin committed during the entire existence perishes. King Daśaratha who was equal to ten warriors fighting from chariots, who was full of great wrath, desired to conquer with his great army the city named Sumānasa. He called Vasiṣṭha, the son of the lotus-born (Brahmā), and saluted him. Permitted by the sage, he, mounting upon a horse having a body (white) like the moon, and saluting Viṣṇu, took out the expedition with an army of a hundred akṣauhiṇīs.

19-27. Sādhya (the king of that city), surrounded by his own army, faced Daśaratha to fight with him. The war between the two took place. Having fought for a month, Daśaratha seized that (king) Sādhya. Then, Sādhya's son Bhūṣaṇa, having a few attendants, fought with Daśaratha. Daśaratha too,

observing Sādhya's son to be the ornament of world, did not desire to fight. (He thought:) 'How (should) I kill one like this? When he is killed, what will be (the condition of) his father, his mother and dear wife of full-grown youth? On his body are, as it were, seen flowers, having the receptacles of lotuses with fresher petals, due to embraces, kisses and rollings. My son, similar to him in complexion and age, handsome like him, causing great delight, eaten up by a bear (and thus) dead, comes to my recollection (i.e. I remember him). He, as it were, desires to protect me. He changes my mind.' Thus thinking in his mind, be commenced seizing the boy. That Sādhya also became subservient (to Daśaratha). He too, looking upon the depression due to the defeat as joy, lived happily with the boy.

28-33. Daśaratha also, living there for a month, and observing that pleasure which one gets from seeing the son, thought: 'Oh! this seeing the face of this (boy) is capable of removing all sorrows. Nourishing a son is equal to my conquering of all countries. It just makes me who remember the separation from (i.e. death of) my son, unhappy. Therefore, I shall ask him how such a son is born.' Thinking like this, he asked him. Sādhya also showed the entire path of salvation to the king (i.e. to Daśaratha): "(A man) should worship Viṣṇu and Śiva together. He should fast on all the Ekādaśī-days. He should propitiate brāhmaṇas on the Dvādaśī-days. Having justly procured the food, sauce, along with the seasonal fruits and flowers, he should bathe (the image of) Viṣṇu with cow's milk and besmear it with the powder of kidney-beans. Then he should bathe (the image) with pleasing water, and besmear the entire body (of the image) of the deity with fragrant sandal rubbed by himself, and with excellent musk; then having worshipped (the image) with Tulasī-leaves, and jasmine flowers, karavīra-flowers, blue and other lotuses and red lotuses, with droṇa-flowers, with maruva, damana, girikarṇikā, and ketakī-leaves, as are available, he should propitiate the deity with (the hymn of) twelve syllables, with the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn) or with the repetition of the deity's name or with the sixteen requisite articles, should salute (the deity), and after dancing, should apologise to the deity. So also he should practise vows to please Viṣṇu.

34-40. The revered sage, being pleased, gives the desired

son. So propitiate him." Thus he spoke to Daśaratha. He too installed Sādhya there (i.e. on the throne), went to Ayodhyā, and did all like that. When the sacrifice to obtain a male issue was over, the image of the sacrifice having a conch, a disc and a mace in the hands, came up from the Āhavanīya[1] and said to the king: "Ask for a boon." The king chose (four) sons; he said to (the deity): "Give me four sons who would be very pious, would have a long life, and help the world." The king had four queens: Kauśalyā, Sumitrā, Surupā and Suveṣā. They said to the king: "O lord, let one son be born to each wife (of you)." Then Kauśalyā said: "If this god is pleased, let him be born of me."

The king said:

41. This Viṣṇu is solicited (to give that) which is desired by me: "O Viṣṇu, O lord of gods, O lord of Kamalā, O you holder of a conch, a disc, and a mace, O you fearful one, O you whose couple of feet is saluted by all like the regents of the quarters in the creation, O you eternal one, O Hari, be pleased. My repeated salutations to you."

The lord, thus praised (by the king), said to the king.

Viṣṇu said:

42-45a. I shall be born as your son on Kauśalyā.

Then Viṣṇu entered the oblation of rice and barley boiled for presentation to the gods and manes. The king divided that oblation into four parts and distributed them among his wives. Then Rāma was born from Kauśalyā, Lakṣmaṇa from Sumitrā, Bharata from Surupā, and Śatrughna from Suveṣā; and a shower of flowers fell from the sky. The four-faced (Brahmā) himself came and performed the ceremonies like those performed

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1. Āhavanīya—A consecrated fire taken from the householder's perpetual fire, the eastern fire; the other two fires being: (i) Gārhapatya—one of the three fires perpetually maintained by a householder, which he receives from his father and transmits to his descendants and from which fires for sacrificial purposes are lighted, and (ii) Dakṣiṇa—the southern fire.

at the birth of a child. He named Rāma as Rāma due to his being extremely pleasing in the three worlds; he named the second son Lakṣmaṇa for his being fit due to wealth and qualities like form and valour; (he named the third son) Bharata, since he protected the earth from burden; (he named the fourth one) Śatrughna, since he killed the enemies.

45b-46. Having named them thus Brahmā went home and the childern grew. King Daśaratha having seen the boy Rāma who walked, who looked like the young moon, whose lips were like the bimba-fruits, whose nose was high and was like the sesamum-flower, whose jewelled leaf(-like ornament) moved in front of his crest, from whose ears ear-rings were dangling, the necklace of big pearls on whose chest was dishevelled, whose golden bracelets were bright, whose jewelled bracelets and rings were tinkling, whose girdle was fashioned with gold and gems, whose feet looked charming due to the jingling anklets, whose middle toes were adorned with rings, whose large soles of the feet were adorned with the marks of a diamond-pin, a goad and a lotus, whose shanks were like quivers, whose thighs were like the trunks of elephants, whose hips were large, whose waist was slender, whose navel was round like an eddy and deep, whose chest was large like an emerald-rock, whose neck resembled a conch, whose face was like the orb of the moon, whose forehead was like the half (i.e. crescent) moon, whose hair was dark and curly, who was engaged in playing, who had become grey due to dust (particles), whose eyes were reddish like the petals of a fully blown red lotus, who was dusted as Śiva with the sacred ash, who was naked like Śiva, had his heart full of joy, and having embraced and kissed his son, he firmly clasped him against his chest.

47-49. Then the boy also got on his lap from one side, and with his eyes charmingly fixed on him said something. The king, looking at his son asking (for things) here and there and saying, 'Father, I go; father, I sleep; father, I play' and thus repeatedly deriving joy from his son, became happy. Then once, when the king had come (to the dining hall) to eat, Rāmacandra, with his mind attached to child-sports, and having many toys in his lotus-like hand, was jumping and running, and taking with his left hand the food from the golden plate, decked with gold,

and lying before the king, threw it on the king. This too the king looked upon as pleasure (i.e. even this act of Rāma pleased the king). Rāmacandra did such and other (acts).

50-55. Once when Rāma was playing, a stormy wind knocked him down, and he fell down crying. In the meanwhile the ghost of a brāhmaṇa seized Rāma and he fainted. Then the boy, his companion, crying hither and thither, informed the king of Rāma in that condition. Then the king took Rāma and spoke to Vasiṣṭha. He asked him: "What is this (that has happened) to Rāma?" Then Vasiṣṭha took sacred ash, consecrated it, and got rid of that ghost of the brāhmaṇa. He asked him: "Who are you?" and he said: "I am a brāhmaṇa, proud of (my knowledge of) the Vedas. Having frequently snatched away the wealth of others, I became a Brahma-ghost. Think of my acquittance."

Vasiṣṭha said:

56-57. From now onwards you will experience demonhood (i.e. will live like a demon), (go to hell,) and then (after having) a bath in Gaṅgā, and having offered a hundred bilva-leaves to Śiva, and then (again) having bathed, you will be free from sin. If you might do (acts of) religious merit like that I shall give you a (good) status, and after that enjoy an excellent position.

Hearing these words of Vasiṣṭha, that ghost of a brāhmaṇa, due to (the acts of) religious merit as advised by Vasiṣṭha, got a divine body, and having saluted (him), he went to heaven.

58-60. Having invested Rāma with the sacred thread at the proper time, Vasiṣṭha taught him the Vedas, the Vedāṅgas, both the Mīmāṁsās, and science of politics; he also taught him archery, the science of medicine, science of music[1] and dramaturgy, and of singing, the science of building houses, of omens[2], and various rules of war. Then Daśaratha who desired to get (Rāma) married, sent his messengers to the kings of various countries.

61-62. Then one messenger quickly came to the king, and said: "O king, the lord of the Vidarbha country is the king Videha by name. His daughter is Vaidehī whom he obtained

1. Bharata—Science of music and dramaturgy.
2. Śakuna—Science of omens.

from a sacrifice. She is like Lakṣmī in beauty; she is endowed with all (good) characteristics. She is proper for Rāma. The king is ready to give her (in marriage) to Rāma. So go (to that king) quickly." Then he (i.e. Daśaratha) sent Vasiṣṭha and others. They went there, and having found out an auspicious moment, decided it; (then) they came to Ayodhyā and informed the king; and with Rāma, and with kings, they quicky (went) with many elephants, horses, carts, palanquins, swings.

63. Many ladies came there to celebrate the auspicious ceremony of marriage. They were very beautiful and were skilled in the acts of pleasures and amorous pastimes. They knew the various acts of gandharvas. They were adept in the science of love. Their breasts were soft and hard, and reached their necks. Their lotus-like faces had big and small foreheads and bimba-like lips. Their braids had curly and long hair. They had put on golden ornaments on their ears. Their teeth appeared reddish due to the japā flowers, adorned by the down rising due to the act of bathing. Their eyes were clear and tremulous like the small glittering fish. Their ears were like conches. Their noses were adorned with big pearls resembling the stars. Their cheeks were like mirrors. Their noses were like sesamum flowers. The nipples of their breasts were slightly bent in the middle. The wounds made by the teeth (of the lovers) on their lips resembled the indragopa insect (of red and white colour). Their bodies appeared even and tall. They were round in all parts. They were not very fat. The top knots of their garments were like balls. Their armpits were bent round. The armpits resembled the petals due to the down recently standing up and due their colour like that of turmeric. Their waists were soft, glossy and had fine circles. Their breasts looked charming on account of various jewelled necklaces dangling on the breasts with the neck ornament in between the two breasts, hard and large, and with the nipples slightly sunken in. Their bellies looked beautiful due to the uneven line of the short hair growing on the region round their deep navels, that had secured a foot round their breasts as a result of a series of the glances of the young. Their bellies were adorned with three folds, and their middle (part i.e. waist) could (just) be seized with the fist. Their hip-regions resembled the trunks of elephants. Their knees were soft, glossy, clean and even.

The pairs of their thighs were like the plantain trees. Their shanks had the knees slightly sunken in, were round and without fleshy swelling. Their ankles were slightly sunken in. Their feet had fine, glossy short and long toes, and were challenging Cupid with the jingling of the anklets. They were walking like swans and elephants. The ends of their lower garments touched their right toes. Above the hem of the lower garment, they had made folds which they had held in both their hands; their necks were not covered with garments (but) the garments (i.e. the bodices) of the breasts were covered with the upper garments. Their slim bodies were adorned with the fringes of their garments (hanging) from their left shoulders to their right sides.

64. Young girls, with their slim bodies purified with lightning (-like) (bright) silken garments, with their breasts adorned with various necklaces (put on) the breasts resembling lotus-buds that had shot up, talking something, and walking quickly (yet) gently (also had come there).

65. Old ladies also had come there. Then in a little wood of mango-trees, at a distance of a krośa (two miles) from Videha, Daśaratha, along with his ministers and family priests, and along with his sons like the lovely Rāma, camped comfortably. The young ones of the deer in it listened to the cooing of the various birds in the extensive regions of many bushes; in it there were various birds in the regions adorned with high and low palaces fashioned with gold; the row of trees there were adorned with the meditation and worship of the hosts of sages who were covered with the garments of campaka-barks, whose bodies were dusted with sacred ash and who had matted hair; which had a lake, the ripples on which were disturbed, being overpowered by the burden of the breasts of many young wives of vidyādharas; in which young men were invited by the young maid-servants who had gathered on the banks of the lake; the entire region of which was made fragrant with the flowers of many colours, in which prostitutes, with a desire to enjoy, had their bodies shining with the unsteady brilliance of their eyes resembling the small glittering fish, and largely exhibited here and there.

66. The king of Videha also decorated the city of Mithilā with many banners, with various palaces, city-gates, gardens and temples; it was crowded with young ladies skilled in sporting

with one another; the great supply of water of the city was embellished with sandal; its highways were adorned with people engaged in charming sports; its streets were decorated with various commodities; the places of learning everywhere were graced with the sound of (the recital of) the Vedas; in every house the study of Sāmaveda was done along with explanations of the Mīmāṁsā; where the orchards of the brāhmaṇas were having the fragrance of auspicious oblations and were full of the sacred texts like Sāmaveda recited with accents, and with each word being pronounced in its original form and independently of the phonetic changes and in due order; in which, at the entry of lordly abodes there were rewards like agaru (sandal), saffron and the abodes of the Adhvaryus; in which were ladies graced with bulb-like left shoulders looking charming due to the middle region of the breasts that were glossy and round, and that were rubbing against each other, and due to the upper part of the soft, white garment worn round the hips; which was graced with thousands of florists, smiling gently with their teeth resembling many pearl-necklaces and lips (red) like japā flowers; in which were abodes where pleasing spirituous liquors could be had; it had beautiful arches everywhere; its paths were clean; at every place desire-yielding trees were planted; its gates were adorned with plantain trees.

67-72a. The king went out with ladies who carried auspicious articles like turmeric, dūrvā, sacred rice grains, collyrium for the hair, braids, head charming due to parting of the hair, beautiful ornaments for the nose, face, so also articles like ghee, guggalu (a fragrant gum resin) and fruits put in golden pots; and (he was) also (accompanied) by other persons who had adorned themselves. At that time, the auspicious sound of the musical instruments, the sounds of small and big drums and of conches etc. became audible. The singers also sang auspicious (songs). The brāhmaṇas well-versed in the Vedas filled the entire sky with the auspicious Vedic recitals, and the family preceptors filled it with the sound of drums. Then they, accepting one another after giving sacred rice grains (to one another) and being praised by bards and panegyrists, entered the city.

72b-87. Daśaratha entered the abode made in the western

part of the city. The rest (of the people) also duly entered the abode. At that time only Nārada had come to Mithilā. King Videha worshipped the divine sage and looking to his reception, fed him, and giving tāmbūla with camphor to the sage who was comfortably seated, said to him with respect: "Tomorrow (is my daughter's) marriage. Please stay on to get the marriage (-ceremony) performed."

Nārada said:

Tomorrow the stars such as the solar stars would (only) be seen. The marriage should not be celebrated on that day.

Then the king, having called his astrologer Gārgya, asked him: "Which is the auspicious time for the marriage?" Gārgya said: "Tomorrow". Then the king looking up at Nārada and Gārgya asked (i.e. said): "Oh, this is so." Then Nārada spoke to Gārgya: "How can you give the auspicious moment?" Then Gārgya said, "Avoiding the inauspicious time, I shall give (i.e. state) the auspicious moment." Then Nārada also said to Gārgya, "Do you not know the words of Brahmā?" Gārgya, who was pleased, quoted the faults: "Formerly Brahmā has observed that a meteor, the curse of a brāhmaṇa and causeless trembling lead to the destruction of the entire undertaking.

88-92. Except in the rites of thread ceremony and consecration, in all other (auspicious) rites like the installation (of images), marriages, a man should avoid inauspicious moments. One who performs the rites after (these are avoided) is not at a fault. Afterwards I shall tell about the defect in rites like marriages". "A meteor would burn the entire family; a brāhmaṇa's curse would destroy (it); the causeless tremor would lead to death and to the disturbance of the rite." Having heard (these words) uttered by Nārada, the sage Gārgya became silent. He thought (to himself): 'Avoiding the Sun, the lord of Planets, and inauspicious time, the marriage should be performed.'

Nārada said:

93. How are the words of the brāhmaṇa? (i.e. what does the brāhmaṇa say)?

The Sun said:

94-95. The arrangement is said to (be based) on the difference in regions. In this country the marriage must be celebrated by avoiding the inauspicious time.

Nārada also consented.

96-98. He said: "The kṣatriya-marriage will take place tomorrow afternoon. So let the kings come for the self-choice marriage. O king, send messengers (to the kings)." Then, having brought all the kings with Daśaratha's consent, the king thought: 'How should Vaidehī be given to Rāma, after condemning all (other) kings?' At night, he though sleepy, did not get sleep.

99. At midnight the king, having purified himself mentally thought of Tryambaka who was with Ambā (i.e. Pārvatī), who had worn an auspicious silken garment, whose lotus-like feet were being served by all gods led by Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Indra, by the leading sages like Bhṛgu, by gandharvas led by Hāhā, by Tumburu (and others), so also by the sacred texts, the codes of laws, historical works and Purāṇas in bodily forms, so also by the hosts of divine mothers, by siddhas, vidyādharas, and by the attendants led by Nandin, who removed all inauspicious things, whose region of the head was being waited upon by Gaṅgā of holy water and by the spotless moon, to whom a tāmbūla was being offered by Girijā (i.e. Pārvatī) seated on his left lap, who took it with a smile, willingly and with a glance, who was (fair) like cow's milk, whose neck was (having the colour) opposite to that of musk, who had arranged his matted hair with soft, fine, glossy, clotted hair, the regions of whose cheeks were graced with pure, golden ear-rings, whose age was twice eight (i.e. sixteen), whose region of the head was wrapped up with a skirt having the colour of large pearls like cow's milk and of Kausumbha, whose chest was adorned with (ornaments) of gold decked with various jewels, whose body was graced with a very white sacred thread, whose body had become reddish and fragrant due to the saffron (from) Pārvatī's body touching his body, who was observing and deriding Cupid's arrow, who resembled a crore of Cupids.

100-102. He (i.e. the king) muttered the Śatarudriya (hymn);

with that (hymn) only he offered desired oblations and praised (Śiva) with the Puruṣa-sūkta (hymn). Then the king saluted him and praised him.

The king said:

103. O you, having eight forms (constituted) by earth, water, sky (i.e. ether), air, fire, the sun, the moon (and) the sacrificer, O you of a universal form, O you of the form of the world, O you of the form of the three worlds, O you of the form of the Vedas and the Purāṇas, O you of the form of sacrifice, O you of the form of Nārāyaṇa, O you of the form of all deities, O you full of the three (Vedas), O you the authority on the three (Vedas), O you having eyes in the form of the three (Vedas), O you loving the Sāma (Veda), O you to whom the capital of Kubera is dear, O you who are (easily) accessible to your devotees, O you who are away from those who are not your devotees, O you who like praise, O you who like incense, O you who like a light (to be waved in front of your representation), O you who like ghee and milk, O you to whom droṇa and karavīra are dear, O you who like śrī-leaves, O you to whom lotuses and white lotuses are dear, O you who love Nandin's curly hair, O you who love bakula, jasmine, kokanada, a watery place in summer, O you who like restraints and curbs, O you to whom one with one's senses controlled is dear, O you who love muttering of a hymn, O you to whom śrāddha is dear, O you who love singing, O you to whom the Gāyatrī(-hymn) is dear, to whom the five, Brahmā (and others) are dear, O you to whom good conduct is dear, O you whose feet are worshipped by the three, viz. Indra, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, O you who manifested the disc sought for by Viṣṇu and produced from water, O you who give recollection and reasoning, O you who grant auspiciousness when remembered, O you victory on the earth, my repeated salutation to you.

104. Having heard this hymn of praise Lord Śiva said to the king: "I shall grant (you) a boon. Ask for one."

The king said:

105-108. O lord, I desire to give my daughter (in marriage) to Rāma. If, in the gathering of all beings like many kings,

demons, brāhmaṇas, someone of a superior strength and endowed with (birth in a noble) family, power and energy takes her away then my words would be falsified, and sin will come to me; (and) on the other hand, when Daśaratha capable of destroying the kṣatriyas comes to conquer all these, so also when Rāma (comes), then what will my daughter do? Whom will the king, with a big army and horses and elephants, send? What will he get done ? What will he do to me? He may destroy all the three worlds. Moreover, for me of a small energy you alone are the refuge. Tell me the remedy so that it would be helpful to the marriage, and Rāma will be my son-in-law.

Śambhu also said: "I shall do like that. Rāma only will be the husband of Sītā. Today only I shall do auspicious things for Rāma. Take this Ājagava bow (of mine)."

The king said:

109. What is the use of this Ājagava bow? You yourself (should) take (i.e. marry) Sītā to Rāma.

Śaṅkara said:

110-113. Make this pledge: "This bow is not strung. I shall give Sītā (in marriage) to him who will string it."

Speaking like this, Śiva vanished with his attendants. Even with a great effort the king could not take up the bow. Then calling Ujjvala, having the strength of a thousand elephants, he said to him: "Take (this bow)." He too, saluting his maternal uncle, having laughed loudly, having jumped, raised the bow with his two hands upto his knees. The maternal uncle (of Rāvaṇa), viz. Mārīca, alone put on the garb of a brāhmaṇa, and solicited (king) Videha: "Know me to be a guest who has come at the end of the offering to all deities."

The king said:

114-117. Welcome to you. O brāhmaṇa, this is the seat. (Please) be seated on it.

The guest also, saying, 'All right' sat there. Then the king

took water, washed his feet (with it) and after having worshipped him with sandal, flowers and sacred rice grains, and having offered him (the cooked meat of) a big goat, requested him to eat it. He too, as it were looking here and there, saw that food having six flavours and put in a golden plate.

118. At that time only Sītā came there. She had the splendour of lotus-filaments. She had put on a reddish garment. Her forehead was graced with hair which was dark and curly, which was unsteady, which attracted the minds of young men, which spilt up the sight of the seer, thereby as it were showing that ladies' hearts are like this only. Her eyebrows were like Cupid's bow. Her eyes were reddish like lotus-petals. Her nose was like the sesamum. Her reddish lips were close to her glossy, hairy cheeks, and resembled rubies. Her teeth were like (the seeds of) a pomegranate. Her lips were reddish like the japā flowers. Her chin was very beautiful. Her ears were like oyster-shells. Her neck was even and long. Her breasts were fleshy. The bud-like breasts were round and raised. She looked beautiful with many necklaces. Her figure was beautiful. Her creeper-like arms were not very fleshy. She was innocent. The tips of her fingers were moderate, even and were dyed with the alaktaka dye. She had put on various jewelled rings. She was holding a white lily. She came in front of Mārīca who was eating.

119-122. Seeing her, he thought: 'How shall I kidnap her? How shall I embrace her? How shall I do something else?' Thus (he thought). (But) not getting an opportunity, he just quietly went out. Then the gods strove to string the bow. They stood there competing with one another and disdaining one another. Indra reached that excellent bow. But he was not able to do more than (just) bending the two ends. Then the Sun took the bow, but fell down while bending it. Vāyu, the best among the mighty, seized the Ājagava bow and while lifting it with his own hand, fell down; and the bow fell on him. All laughed at that time.

123-128. In the meanwhile, demon Bāṇa having a thousand arms, surrounded by demons with many heads, and accompanied by Prahlāda came there after having mounted upon an excellent horse. Then, making the directions bright with his ornaments, making the gods void of glory by means of his glory, hearing

many songs, he was able (to lift it to the height of) two fingers, and gave up. Prahlāda and Bali also ran, but they also stopped. When the demons became quiet, very powerful kings arrived there, were unable to string the bow, (so) went away (i.e. withdrew) and remained (there). Then brāhmaṇas came there. Then Viśvāmitra took the bow, and after stringing it upto the length of a finger, stopped. The others retired.

129-132. And then in the space of the day, when the bow was silent, Rāma came with his brothers, and observing the bow, touched it. Then princes, adorned with all ornaments, came in hundreds. They saw the bow, touched it, but were unable to move it. Then other boys, led by Daśaratha's (other) sons arrived (there). Then men having canes and drums in their hands came there, and drove away all.

133. Then Rāma holding the hand of Lakṣmaṇa and adorned with all ornaments reached the bow, touched it, saluted it, went round it keeping it to his right. Then he took it, and lifted it.

134-138. When he took it, all laughed and said: "Here (i.e. in the attempt at lifting it) very mighty warriors have failed." Then that Rāma, bent the place of the string of the bow, and putting his knee on the bow, strung it, raised it with one hand, and bent it at the tip. Seeing the bow strung (by (Rāma) all kept their fingers on the tips of their noses (i.e. were amazed). Rāma also made the twang of the bow. Due to that sound the minds of all were agitated. Everywhere there was the talk; "Rāma has strung the bow".

139-141. Janaka too gave Sītā to Rāma. Having fought with the kings, and having vanquished them, he came to his own city. Then once Daśaratha consecrated Rāma as the heir-apparent, and became happy. There was a talk among all the subjects that Rāma was liked as a king due to his pleasing the subjects. Then, Suveṣā, the daughter of the king of Kaikeya, not enduring (that) Rāma (was to be) the king, said to the king (i.e. Daśaratha): "This is the time for granting my boons." The king thought: 'What should be given (to her)?'

The queen said:

142-144. Let Rāma enter (and live in) a forest for fourteen years. Let Bharata look after the kingdom.

Due to the fear of lying the king somehow accepted (her demand). Then he spoke to Vasiṣṭha about (Rāma's future): "Rāma is going out to the forest. What will happen to him? Having thought (about it) tell (me) (what is) good and (what is) bad (in his future)."

145-148. Vasiṣṭha thought over (it), and gladly spoke to the king: "Having gone to the forest, he will kill all the brave demons. He will worship Śiva in many ways. Rāma, being angry due to being separated from Sītā, will cross the ocean with the army of the monkeys, and will kill Rāvaṇa. Having come (back to Ayodhyā), Rāma will rule for many years. Having had great fame in the entire world, he will live for a long time with god Śarva (i.e. Śiva). He will be endowed with good sons, will perform many sacrifices; he, the lord, will be superior to all in virtues."

149-151. Hearing these words of Vasiṣṭha, Daśaratha, remembering the virtues of Rāma, spoke thus: "When Rāma goes out (of my kingdom), it is better for me to die." Then Rāma, having saluted his mother, father, preceptor Vasiṣṭha, the preceptor's wife, left for the forest. Then having lived for one day in the park, having arranged the matted hair, having put on a bark-garment, having worn one sacred thread, having cleaned his teeth, having tied his matted hair with one sacred thread, having dusted his entire body with sacred ash and thus looking rough, wearing on his head a rosary in place of a necklace of pearls and jewels, accompanied by Sītā adorned with a few ornaments, and followed by Lakṣmaṇa, entered the interior of the forest.

152-154. Then he killed many demons in it; did everything like you; everything like Sītā's being kidnapped took place as in your case; then he went to Ṛṣyamūka mountain, to the hermitage of Sugrīva; and having found a mango tree with a dense shadow, put up there a resort with the help of Lakṣmaṇa. He put the two bows on the tree; put his head on Lakṣmaṇa's lap, and lay on

a bed of deer-hide; listened to a known song; observed the fruit of the tree; he (then) saw a monkey, having jewelled ear-rings, tawny like gold, with the girdle of muñja grass firmly tied around his privity, having, a clean sacred thread, being very fickle, taking a fruit and throwing it to himself, scattering flowers and shoots, imitating the song, fanning Rāma with a fan, fanning him, even after having climbed the branch of the tree, having tied only the mango fruits, and said to Lakṣmaṇa: "Lakṣmaṇa, who is this monkey?" Lakṣmaṇa also said: "I do not know". Then Rāma called (the monkey) and asked him: "To whom do you belong? What is your name?"

155-157. He said, "I am Hanūmat (the servant) of Sugrīva." Having saluted him (i.e. Sugrīva; he said): "There is a man, who is like another Viṣṇu, who is young, who is dark like a cloud, who has matted hair, whose hands reach his knees, who is extremely glorious, and who is accompanied by another man resembling the sun. The two princes, endowed with all good characteristics are staying in the shade of a tree. They saw me and said to me: 'Inform Sugrīva.' Therefore, I have informed you."

158-161. Then Sugrīva quickly got up, took materials like flowers and water, and having washed their feet etc., having offered fruits, he said respectfully: "Who are you, young men? What have you, ascetic princes, come (here) for?" Having heard (these) words of Sugrīva, Rāma, with Lakṣmaṇa, said: "We two are Daśaratha's sons, Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa. We have come to the forest for curbing the wicked and protecting the good." Then Sugrīva said: "It appears that your help is harmful; otherwise you would have come with an army."

162. Lakṣmaṇa said: "There is another mission. This one's wife has been kidnapped by someone. We do not know (by whom). We have come to search for her. That is our (main) mission. Other (things) are incidental. For that we would even cross the ocean, we would even enter the nether world, we would even go to heaven, we would even knock down Indra, we would even strike Bali; (in short) we would do anything."

Sugrīva said:

163-165. I shall show you certain ornaments dropped by a lady who was kidnapped by Rāvaṇa and collected by me.

Saying so, and inviting Rāma to his abode, he showed them (to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa). Rāma too observed them and having decided (that they were Sītā's ornaments), wept and asked: "Where has that Rāvaṇa gone?" He replied: "He has gone to the southern direction." Rāma formed friendship with him (i.e. Sugrīva) and asked him: "Why do you remain here without your wife?"

Sugrīva said:

166-173. My very mighty brother Vālin, having snatched away my kingdom and my wife, lives in Kiṣkindhā. I was defeated by him in a battle; all my anxiety is about killing him. If you kill him, then I also, restraining the ocean, will offer you Sītā kindnapped by Rāvaṇa and living in Laṅkā on the other shore (of the ocean).

Speaking like this, and taking an oath, he invited (i.e. challenged) Vālin for a fight, and fought with him. Then Rāma too, not being certain (about the identity of Vālin), did not kill him. Then Sugrīva fled, and said these (words) to Rāma: "Not knowing (what was in) your mind, I set out to die" Rāma also (said): "Not having particular knowledge about you two, I kept quiet. Having observed (i.e. recognised) you who would have a mark, I shall kill him." Then Sugrīva making a mark (on his person), invited (i.e. challenged) Vālin for a fight. Tārā said to Vālin: "It appears Sugrīva has some companion. Otherwise he would not challenge like this. Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, Daśaratha's sons, and portions of Viṣṇu, who have come to lessen down the burden of the earth, have become his companions."

Vālin said:

174-179. I have heard that Rāma has political wisdom. A man like him would not leave a strong man and resort to a weak one. Let Rāma come. He will be frightened after taking the one who has approached him as superior. If Rāma himself comes to fight, then fight has to be gone through.

Having said so and honoured Tārā, he went out to fight with Sugrīva. Then between the two a fight of fist took place. Rāma

too struck Vālin; Vālin fell down. He said (to Rāma): "You have struck (me) with an arrow in a fight without weapons." His entire body was full of blood. Then Tārā and Aṅgada came (there) and were afflicted. Then the monkeys came to Rāma, fell near Vālin, and wept.

180-184. Then Tārā said to Rāma: "Formerly the descendents of Raghu were well-versed in sacred texts, brave and righteous. How is it, O Rāma, that you have committed a sin? You do not know the way of the life of a kṣatriya, which is followed by hosts of kings. In a fight (between two warriors) fighting with each other, victory or death would take place. The one who kills the other one (not fighting) is called the killer of a brāhmaṇa. Have you killed Vālin due to enmity or with a desire for (eating) the flesh of a monkey? The flesh of a monkey is not to be eaten. If you think that others are like that (i.e. like you) because of the absence of happiness (i.e. unhappiness) of you, or if you, through infatuation, have done this to take me (away), then (you have to remember that) you have the vow of having one wife (only).

185-187. If you havedone this for (getting) Sugrīva's help to bring (back) Sītā kidnapped by Rāvaṇa, then there is a great difference (between Vālin and Sugrīva). Your mission would succeed when Vālin, rich in might, able to bring (back) Sītā in a day, able to give (you) Rāvaṇa (just) when you remember him, and having fifty parārdhas of the army of monkeys and bears, is there. Then what is the use of Sugrīva, the monkey who is the general of seven parārdhas (of army), who has little might? What mission of you who keep your promise, would succeed" "O! what you have said and which is auspicious to all is understood (by me)." Rāma says, "By me who am a king, curbing of the wicked and the protection of the good is to be done. Vālin took away Sugrīva's wife Rūmā and his kingdom also. Therefore, there is no sin in killing one like him."

Tārā said:

188. Then Sugrīva also should be killed. Vālin, fighting with Dundubhi, entered a cave, and remained there for a year. In the meantime, Sugrīva kidnapped me and ruled (over Vālin's kingdom). Therefore kill him first, then him (i.e. Vālin).

Rāma said:

189. Tell me before which time this took place.

Tārā said:

190-193. In the eightieth year before sixty thousand years Sugrīva took away the kingdom in a battle with the demons. Then when a year was over Vālin made Sugrīva flee. He took away his wife and kingdom also. On that day only the consecration of your father Daśaratha (as a king) took place.

Rāghava said:

194-196. By the order of my father and due to the custom of not transgressing the words of elders, I curbed the wicked in his kingdom. At the time of her being kindnapped, he who was the king, did not act (properly). Or the beasts are free. Vālin, one of the two beasts, is killed. Beasts tear off one another and dislike one another. Say, since my hunting is of the beasts that are moving, stationary or bound, or of those movingaway, getting confused and having fled, when I parted company (with the king), I had given up hunting.

197-199. I have executed this hunting according to the rules of the science of hunting—(sometimes) running, and (sometimes) not running. The spot higher than a creeping plant in case of those belonging to the same family, is pierced through (*obscure*). Hunting without eating the flesh (of the animal killed) is the rule in the hunting done by a king.

Having heard Rāma's words, all nodded their heads.

200-205. Having put the hollow made by his palms on his head, Vālin said to Rāma: "I salute you, O Rāma; listen to my words. I have heard that you are actually Viṣṇu himself having in his hands a conch, a disc, and a mace, wearing a yellow garment, and the master of the world. The meditating saints think of you (only). The sacrificers offer sacrifices to you. You alone enjoy the oblations to deities and dead ancestors. You take up the form of the deities and the manes. The salvation of him who thinks about you at the time of his death, is not far

away. That you, O Rāma, is (today) seen by me. My sins have perished. O you descendant of Kakutstha, take your arrow. I am very much afflicted." Then, Rāma, saying, 'All right', took an arrow and said to Vālin, "Tell (me) what desired thing should be given (to you)."

The monkey (i.e. Vālin) said:

206-209. If the revered one is pleased, then give me beatitude. Thus, Sugrīva should be protected by you, so also Aṅgada, and Tārā (also should be protected). I, a sinner had committed a sin; I have experienced its fruit.

Then looking at Rāma, Vālin died and went to heaven. Then (Rāma), having consecrated Sugrīva as the king, entered the forest.

210-212. Then, Rāma, with him as his companion, went near the ocean, and said to Sugrīva: "Where is Laṅkā? Where is Sītā? Where is the enemy?" Then Hanūmat said: "May the lord order whether after having entered Laṅkā, having looked for Sītā, and having known the full truth, truce or war should be made. What suggestion do you make for crossing the ocean?" Then Rāma said to Sugrīva: "How can this take place?"

The monkey (i.e. Sugrīva) said:

213-214. I have crores of monkeys led by bears. Having appointed one (of them), and having known the whole (truth), what is proper should be done.

Then Jāmbavat said:

215-217. Let Hanūmat alone go and know (i.e. find out all about) Laṅkā.

Then Hanūmat went to the city of Laṅkā, looked for Sītā seated in the Aśoka-grove, talked to her, secured her confidence, devastated the grove and baffled the demons. He was bound by the demon (Rāvaṇa); he burnt Laṅkā, went to the northern shore, saw Rāma, told him the account, and remained silent.

218-220. Then Rāma had consultations with all. Jāmbavat said: "I was told by Nārada that Rāma will destroy Laṅkā through the monkeys. So we should strive to cross the ocean."

Then Rāma propitiated Śaṅkara, and told him: "I shall do whatever is told by you." Uttering these words, having worshipped Śiva and having saluted him, he said (to him) respectfully:

221. "O great god, O you who swllow great beings, O you the cause of the great deluge, O you having ornaments of the great serpents, O Mahārudra, O Śaṅkara, O highest god, O Virūpākṣa, O you having the serpent as your sacred thread, O you having the garment of an elephant's, hide O you having the ornament of the string of skulls, O you having the ornaments of the demon's bones, O you to whom ash is dear, O you who love Nārāyaṇa, O you of an auspicious conduct, O you the god of the five like Brahmā etc., O you who are known by the five-faced one, the four-faced one, and the Vedas, O you who are easily accessible to your devotees and difficult to be obtained by non-devotees, O you who are great joy and knowledge, O you who knocked the teeth of the great Pūṣa, O you who cut off Dakṣa's head, O you who removed the fifth head of Brahmā, O you dear to Pārvatī, O you whose auspicious life (-story) is sung by Nārada, O Śarva, O you having three eyes, O you trident-holder, O you having the bow (called Pināka) in your hand, O you having matted hair, O you having many forms, O you having the bull (viz. Nandin) as your vehicle, O you resembling a clear crystal, O you having four hands, O you having many weapons, O Dakṣiṇāmūrti, O lord, O god, O lord, O you having Gaṅgā (on your head), O you conqueror of Tripura, O you having your abode on Śrīśaila, O Kāśīnātha, O you the ornament, of Kedāreśvara, O Siddheśvara, O Gokarṇeśvara, O Kanakhaleśvara, O Pārvatīśvara, O giver of the disc, O you who removed the worry of Bāṇa, O you whose lotus-like feet are worshipped by the conqueror of Mura, O Soma, O you, having the moon as your ornament, O you omniscient one, O you full of lustre, O you full of the world, salutation, salutation to you."

222. Before Rāma who was praising like this, an image, full of lustre, and remaining in the Phallus, appeared. He granted fearlessness also.

223-225. Rāma saw the lord who was seated in the posture called padmāsana, who had Pārvatī on his lap, who had tied (i.e. put on) all ornaments, whose crown was very bright, who

touched the waist of the daughter of Himavat, granting a boon of fearlessness with both hands, full of lustre due to many wavy directions, whose face was smiling, whose face was pleased; with his palms joined he saluted the highest lord, and again fell (i.e. prostrated before him) like a staff. Then the lord also said to Rāma: "You ask for a boon; I am the giver of boons."

Rāma said:

226. I shall go to Laṅkā. O Śambhu, give (i.e. show) me a way to cross the ocean.

Śambhu said:

227-233. I have the Ājagava bow; it becomes (i.e. changes itself) according to the time and has no alternative. Having got on it, having crossed the ocean, reach Laṅkā.

Rāma, saying, 'All right', remembered the Ājagava (bow). The bow came (there). Rāma then worshipped it. Then Śiva took the bow and gave it to Rāma. Rāma too dropped it into the ocean. All the monkeys and Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa also got upon it; when the sixty parārdhas of monkeys mounted upon it, it reached the (other) shore according to (Rāma's) desire. Then the monkeys also having gone (here and) there, observed.

234-237. Then a demon named Atikāya saw the army of the monkeys and said to (i.e. told) Rāvaṇa (about) it. Rāvaṇa too said: "Has our food fortunately come through the monkeys, or through the human beings—Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa?" Then, when the sun went to the west (i.e. when the sun was setting), Sugrīva, along with innumerable very strong monkeys of large bodies like Hanūmat, Jāmbavat etc., went to the side of (i.e. near) Laṅkā, entered the park, ate various fruits, drank water, made the demons guarding the park flee, seized the entire forest (by seizing the trees) one by one, and ran away. Then he went to Laṅkā, the city-gate, climbed the palace, shattered it, took every pillar and fought with the demons. Some broke to pieces the hall, pounded the houses, killed all the young and the old and women etc.

238-246. Then having known that one rampart was acquired

by conquest, Rāvaṇa ordered Indrajit The monkeys also fought with Indrajit, were frightened and ran away. Then Hanūmat having come to know that all had gone out, so also knowing Rāvaṇa, and calling the monkeys and having considered Rāvaṇa, was delighted. Then Indrajit, remaining in the sky (i.e. air) only fought, and the monkeys did not notice him. Then Hanūmat and Jāmbavat jumped into the sky and struck Indrajit with the peaks of mountains. Then he fell on the ground, and Lakṣmaṇa made him go to the world of Yama. Then Atikāya and Mahākāya struck the army of the monkeys in various ways, harassed Lakṣmaṇa, fought with Rāma, hurt Sugrīva, fought with Hanūmat and Jāmbavat. The two (i.e. Hanūmat and Jāmbavat) defeated them, and capturing the two warriors, took them near Rāma, and reported to him. Rāma said to Atikāya: "Tell (us) about the war between me and Rāvaṇa and other very fearful ministers."

Atikāya said:

247-248. Having divided the army, we shall first certainly have war (with you). There is a demon by name Vidyunmālin. He is very mighty. He is a strange fighter. He is visible or invisible when he fights. He alone will fight with all monkeys. Many other strong, great (warriors) who have been taught (the use of) weapons, have come. We two also shall fight with you. Having got into the Puṣpaka, from the other side Rāvaṇa shall kill you only.

249-253. Other demons like Kumbhakarṇa also, taking their own forms, will surround and seize you; then they will show you to Sītā and kill you near her only.

Rāma said: "Oh, what cannot be accomplished by the powerful! The way of destiny is crooked." Sugrīva, getting very much enraged, looked angrily at Rāma and said to him: "These two should be killed. They should not be released". Rāma said: "They should not be killed; they should be released. Bring garments and ornaments". As soon as he said these (words), Hanūmat brought them, and Rāma gave them to the two (demons). Having saluted Rāma, (they said): "Śukra has said that when the wood bent at five places, which is seen at the

gate of Laṅkā, is broken, Rāvaṇa will be killed.

254-260. The order stated by Bhārgava written down is: 'Immediately after the cutting of the wood, he should go to the nether world.' Therefore, cut off this wood in one effort by dropping your arrow into the five parts. Then, knowing your power, we shall have a very close fight." Then knowing the words of Bhārgava, Rāma strung the bow just by touching the first end of it, and fixing the arrow on the bow, and just while making the demons and Hanūmat hear (the stringing of the bow), discharged an arrow. The arrow left the bow. The two demons marked the path of the arrow. The wood was cut off into five parts by the arrow. Seeing this they requested Rāma: "Our children should be protected by you." Rāma said: "All right." The demons entered Laṅkā. Then the monkeys went to fight at the rampart; everywhere they covered it with their hips, feet, knees, hands and backs and made it level, and then went to another rampart. Then that Rāvaṇa came (there), and made them flee by (striking them with) his arrows, and as he followed them, he went to Rāma. He struck Rāma also with five arrows. Then Rāma wounded Rāvaṇa with ten arrows.

261-275. Then a very fierce fight took place between the two. Rāvaṇa struck (Rāma) with ten arrows. Then the demon, with his body wounded by Rāma's arrows, became intent upon running (away). The monkeys and Lakṣmaṇa killed crores of demons. Then the next day, Bibhīṣaṇa discussing (this) with Rāvaṇa, said these words to Rāvaṇa: "This is the time (to use) the third means of success against the enemy. Do not think of the fourth. The fourth one, which is wrong, is not recommended for one who acts according to (the rules of) material welfare. Knowing the power of the enemy and of his own, and if his own power is superior, then war is recommended. The opposite would be destructive. You who are weak should not fight with the strong Rāma. He killed Vālin with (only) one arrow; and you have known Vālin before. He (killed) Mārīca with one arrow; and you too have fled. The brave demons are killed. Your son Indrajit also is killed. The excellent triad is broken; (so) do not fight with him. Accept his service after having given (back) Sītā to him. The wood at the city-gate, crooked at five

places, was cut off by Rāma with one arrow. Therefore, Rāma will kill you. For your sake many have perished; and many others will perish. O my brother, justice alone leads to happiness and not folly. Dismiss the loyal human wife who is embracing death, of the strong (Rāma) after honouring her. There will be a series of calamities if you unite with her when she is unwilling. The union with a woman accompanied by stinking filth is censured. If there is detachment, then doing what is prohibited leads to unhappiness. If you love her, then there would follow your death, and then (you will go to) hell.

276-281a. In vain will you die today if you unite with her; and, O dear one, you will either abandon your religiously wedded wife, or she might also die. There will be this and other sin. I shall make to you another suggestion dear to and beneficial for all. Going to Rāma and saluting and praising him say to him respectfully: 'O Rāma, loving those who have sought your refuge, forgive me. We all are vicious demons and are great sinners. Giving up (i.e. making us absolved of) the sin of kidnapping Sītā, protect our sons. O Rāma, we depend upon you. Protect or kill us as you wish.' O Rāvaṇa, we who, after having spoken like this, stand before that Rāma, will have a stable life, and a stable kingdom."

281b-283. Then Rāvaṇa said (these) words: "Oh! you are not a demon, you are not brave; you do not know the eternal way of life of a king. The best way of life for the brave-and not for the impotent ones like you, is by means of resorting to another man's wife, another man's wealth, and another man's kingdom. O prince, if you desire, join the enemy's side; get out."

284-288. Then Bibhīṣaṇa, having (first) gone to his abode, (and then) near Rāma, sought his refuge. Then Rāvaṇa went out of his city and fought with Rāma. The (other) demons also fought with Lakṣmaṇa and the monkeys. Rāma was unable to kill Rāvaṇa of a great might. Then he looked at Bibhīṣaṇa's face, and struck with his arrow the spot with a mark as told by Bibhīṣaṇa. Then Kumbhakarṇa took a great mace, brought about everything, swallowed many monkeys, and struck on the head of Rāma with (his) mace. Then with a hundred sharp arrows Rāma struck him. Kumbhakarṇa died.

289. Then Rāma made Bibhīṣaṇa perform the śrāddha ceremony etc. of Rāvaṇa and others; he got a Śiva-temple erected in his name; he consecrated just that Bibhīṣaṇa only on the kingdom (i.e. as the king) of Laṅkā. He made Sītā, purified by means of her entering the fire, salute Śiva and Pārvatī; he who was given by the conqueror of (Tri-)pura full nectar-like power and life, got into the Puṣpaka, crossed the ocean, settled his army on the other side, installed (a representation of) Śiva there, and being honoured by sages and gods went to Ayodhyā.

290-291. Then accompanied by Bharata and others, and honoured by the citizens, Vasiṣṭha and (other) sages, he went home. He honoured gods like Indra who had come to him by offering them seats; having well honoured the monkeys, and having untied his matted hair, he was consecrated on the kingdom. Gods delighted by the elimination of Rāvaṇa, said to Rāma:

292. "You have put us back on our kingdoms (i.e. thrones); always protect us; you are the first (man) Viṣṇu; you have descended (on the earth) for curbing the wicked. By killing Rāvaṇa along with his relatives, you have become the protector of the three worlds. Be happy with Lakṣmī." Saying so, they went to heaven.

293-298. Then the residents of Ayodhyā, being very much delighted, said to Rāma: "You have come (back) after having killed your enemies. You saw and met Śiva. Rāma, fortunately you shine; fortunately you are protecting the subjects. You will perform sacrifices; you will cause righteousness to grow." Hearing these (words) of his citizens, Rāma, having lotus-like eyes, honoured all the citizens with (i.e. by giving them) garments etc. Worshipping the sages along with all people, the righteous one said to them: "I hope your penance is prospering; I hope your sacrifices are performed well. I hope you are devoted to your wives. I hope you worship the lord. I hope your wives bring forth good progeny. I hope you (enjoy) all excellent pleasures."

The sages said:

299. O descendant of Kakutstha, everything about the ascetics is well-settled. From here we (shall now) go home. Or, O king, what do you think?

Rāma said:

300-305. Śamhbu is pleased with him with whom brāhmaṇas are pleased. He with whom Śiva is pleased, becomes happy. Therefore, please go after taking food here.

Saying, "All right", the hosts of sages ate excellent food, and congratulating him with blessings, and being delighted, they went to their respective abodes. Rāma also, along with wife and younger brothers, was very much pleased. He who was dear to all people ruled over the kingdom free from bad elements. Even if a sinner listens to this episode, he becomes free from all sins, and reaches the highest Brahman. The man who would remember this (episode) would not meet with a calamity; so also the same is said about him who would narrate this episode.

CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEEN

Fruit of Worship by Justly Procured, Stolen and Impaired Material

Sūta said:

1-10. Rāmacandra, of a pleased mind, ate along with the best sages, Viṣṇu, the monkeys and the bears at the hermitage of Bhāradvāja. The sky was covered with clouds; breezes were blowing gently; in that forest, there was somewhere the excellent house of Sudeva. It had eight pillars; it was fashioned with golden strips; it was (decked) with gems and pearls; it had silver pitchers in it; it was made fragrant with sandal, camphor, musk and saffron; it had multitudes of mire and was covered with pieces.*

Moonlight did not reach the walls in its middle part, and also they could not be seen by the sun (i.e. the sun's rays also did not reach them), The entire floor in the house was sprinkled with excellent juice of flowers. The entire (portion on) the north was without a construction of a wall (i.e. without a wall). On every

*कर्द्दमैर्जालकयुतं शकलोपरिसंवृति—this half of verse 4 is obscure.

pillar there were pictures; its courtyard, measuring a hundred cubits had natural parts and was fashioned with crystal. There was a desire-yielding tree in the courtyard, and it covered a larger part of the courtyard by means of its shadow. There was a dense grove of plantain trees forming the entire hedge. With the grove of the plantain trees there was the hedge of ketakī grove. It was full of the cries of peacocks, and bees were sweetly humming in it. It had the cooing of pigeons and was graced with many parks. It was thronged with hundreds of mansions; it was resounding with the notes of intoxicated cuckoos. It had many trees which were graced with big gems hanging from their branches.

11-17. The quarters were filled with the sound of the songs of the female kinnarīs. It was pleasing due to many gardens. (Nearby) there was the excellent bank of Gautamī. The abode of Bhāradvāja was auspicious and was having many excellences. It was full of many male and female servants (respectively) resembling Cupid and (his spouse) Rati. The auspicious abode of Bhāradvāja was full of various implements. Inside it was a white-washed mansion, and there were eight orchards inside it. In the midst of them there was an extremely beautiful house. It was beautified with the palace-like abode of the great god on (all) the four sides. Each temple had graceful nocturnal instrumental music. It was just fashioned for the excellent heavenly women to rest (in it). Rāma moving out of the house of Bhāradvāja went accompanied by all to the great house in the middle of the forest. He entered it, the interior of which was covered with blankets; it had also separate seats (covered) with cloth; at the centre there was a throne; it had many seats for the sages.

18-21. Near the incomparable seat of the public reader of Purāṇas were the excellent seats for the king, the monkeys and the bears. Having seated the public reader of Purāṇas in the east, and then Vasiṣṭha and the best men, as well as Viṣṇu and the kings, he took a low seat. The sky was covered with clouds; the quarters were bright; the earth, with the seeds sown, was having good flowers. The courtyard was neither hot nor cold, had santāna flowers, and was fragrant with dama flowers. Looking at Śambhu, Rāma said (these) words: "(Please) tell (us) the story of Śaṅkara. O best sage, I who am hearing the excellent account of the great lord, which destroys a stream of

sins, am not satisfied. Tell me what the great lord, surrounded by the host of gods, did in Gautama's hermitage."

Śiva said:

22-23. The son of Vāyu, seated with a great lute, asked Śiva; "Tell (me) what the fruit would be by worshipping the lord with materials brought (after) they are procured justly. (Tell me also) what fruit would accrue if they are offered after stealing, and when materials that are collected are impaired. O lord, tell me (about these) one by one. Give the answers (to these) questions quickly. What is the use of the story, O Śambhu?"

24-27a. Then the lord said to the monkey: "I shall tell everything to you. Listen attentively. That Gautama, having worshipped the unborn Sadāśiva with (materials) procured justly, obtained this splendour. Formerly a brāhmaṇa named Ākatha, Maṅkaṇa's son, obtained as his chaste (wife) Suśobhanā. He was poor, full of pity, and without parents. He ate (every) sixth day. When, after having fasted for five days, he proceeded to eat, (just then) an ascetic came (there). The ascetic spoke sweet (words) to Ākatha: 'I who have fasted for a month, stand (here) after having come to you to eat. I shall eat if you have (food). O sage, I do not have a desire to eat in another's house.' "

Ākatha said:

27b-29. O best brahmaṇa, I do not eat for five days. On the sixth day my (turn to eat) food has come. Then I have to think what ought to be done. Come, I shall today wash your feet.

Then the meditating saint said, 'Yes,' and with his both feet being washed, desired to eat the food. He ate that food brought with ghee after it was cooked on the piece of a leaf of plantain tree. It was well furnished with wild articles; it (was) respectfully (served). Nothing was left of the food.

30-33. The ascetic Ākatha, seeing the sage to be pleased, was (himself) pleased along with his wife. The ascetic, having eaten, left. That Ākatha also, with his mind pleased, muttered (a hymn). With his wife he followed the way of the life of pigeons. The sage, with his wife, became ready for the expansion

of his austerities. Having put the lord of Umā in Śiva's Phallus on a seat, he worshipped him accompanied by his attendants. After putting the Phallus when he saw, he observed an unknown brāhmaṇa of an emaciated figure. The lord was naked, without feet, squint-eyed, a cripple with a withered arm, without ears. He recited Sāmans; he was well-versed in many sacred texts. He saw him who had come to his house.

34-36. Then Ākatha said (these) words to his wife Suśobhanā: "This brāhmaṇa of a loathsome dress is coming. Half the food should be given to him. Preserve half the food. When this day also passes, then, I think, on the sixth day you will not live for want of food. Tell me what you think?"

That Śobhanā said:

37. The (span of) life is written on the forehead. Nobody dies in between.

Ākatha said:

38-43a. Vīrabhadra had cut off the head of Sacrifice(?) of a fixed (span of) life and of a perpetual character, then what to say of human beings of a sinful nature? So if, avoiding (to give) him (food) you eat it, then I shall give him (my) food. I shall do according as you wish.

The wife said: "How shall I eat when you have not eaten? Have I formerly eaten (like this)? Listen to this another (thing). Food is the life of beings. This is actually seen by all living beings (i.e. men). Therefore, she who gives food is said to be the giver of life. Beings are produced from food; and since they grow (because of food), there is not greater gift than that of food. The gift of food is highly fruitful. The life of him who does not give to a being a drop of water sticking to the end of a shaking leaf of Aśvattha, is useless. Piety alone helps (a man) in the next world. Neither the wife nor the relatives.

43b-45a. The wife, the parents, the sons are helpful as long as a man's life lasts (i.e. as long as he is alive. They are) not (real) kinsmen. Wealth, youth, friends (of a man live) here only. He, best of those practising piety, enjoys piety here and in the next world. What about us?"

Having heard these words of his wife, Ākatha, the treasure of kindness, gave, without any apprehension, the excellent food to him (i.e. that ascetic).

45b-50. 'This is god Śiva, of many acts, who has come (here)'. Deciding like this, he washed his body—destroying sins—his feet up to his knees, his shanks and ankles below them. Then he made the brāhmaṇa sip water. Then Ākatha brought that brāhmaṇa with crippled feet to his courtyard. He lifted him, of crippled feet, and made him sit on a seat offered to him. Ākatha, having worshipped the sage, fed him. In the meanwhile, some mad man came to the house. He took the man with the crippled feet and took him out of the house. He also burnt their house, and beat up the couple.

51-54a. The brāhmaṇa Ākatha who was beaten, quickly entered the burning house to take (out the representation) of the god. Then the best brāhmaṇa took (the representation of) the god whose worship was burnt, and coming out saw the heat on his face. Despising the worship that was (thus) burnt, and seeing (the representation of the god) with a burnt body, the pious one said to his wife: "Certainly my entire body should be rendered like that (i.e. should be burnt) as the worship of the great lord (is burnt)."

The crippled one said:

54b-55. Your worship done even afterwards will be fruitful, as when other materials are burnt, people give the material like those (as were burnt). In the same way, when (the materials of) worship are burnt, worship should be done like that (i.e. with fresh materials).

Ākatha said:

56-59a. O brāhmaṇa, nothing beneficial takes place by means of the worship which is done with stolen materials. So also, O brāhmaṇa, Śiva's worship done with materials unjustly procured, does not give auspicious (things).

Saying so, Ākatha quickly started to burn his body. Then the mad man took the burnt Phallus and vanished in a moment. Then the crippled one having become Hara (i.e. Śiva) warded

off Ākatha: "O brāhmaṇa, why are you dejected? I am the giver of boons. Ask for a boon." Ākatha also asked for a very steady devotion for the feet of the lord.

Sūta said:

59b-61. Hearing this account, Rāma, surrounded by sages, was pleased. He saluted Bhāradvāja, and solicited his order to leave. Then the sage Bhāradvāja, being pleased, and having saluted Śambhu, the best sage Vasiṣṭha, Viṣṇu and the hosts of sages, dismissed them. They also went after saluting (Gautama).

The (sages) in the Naimiṣa (forest) said:

62. What did Rāma, of great lustre, along with all sages, do? So also (what did) that Śambhu of great glory (do?)

Sūta said:

63-67a. Rāma, desiring to perform the monthly śrāddha of Kauśalyā on the next day, invited excellent brāhmaṇas almost like sages. Rāma, who was singly devoted, (also) invited Śambhu who knew the entire truth, Nārada, Romaśa, Bhṛgu and Viśvāmitra. He slept on a comfortable bed on the ground. When the next morning came, he, having bathed in the morning according to the proper rites, got prepared by cooks pure food, vegetables etc. He (got) prepared various agreeable foods (dishes) to be sucked and chewed; so also thirty-six (other) dishes fit to be eaten like cakes.

67b-71a. He (got) prepared sweetened milk of six kinds, and two hundred cooked vegetables. He kept ready three hundred varieties of uncooked and mixed (articles); so also kāla vegetables, and various (kinds of) fruits. So also Rāma got ready roots and bulbs and bark-garments. With his brothers and family priest he went to the river; and having bathed in the water of Sarayū, having offered oblations into the fire, and speaking words of welcome to the guests the king worshipped the deities. Having restrained his breath, and having decided upon the object he gave them the invitation.

71b-76. Rāma invited Romaśa, Nārada at the all-god sacrifice. He invited Śambhu, Bhṛgu and Kauśika at (the rite in honour of) divine mothers. Then having prepared a circle and

having properly worshipped, he washed the feet (of the sages) with water given by Sītā. Having made those brāhmaṇas sip water he was about to go home. (At that time) a guest came (there). He was old. His figure was deformed. He was slim. His limbs were trembling. Similarly his feet and head were shaking. His (loose) skin was hanging. He was troubled by the excess of asthma. His cheeks had rheum of the eyes clinging to them. His beard was smeared with saliva. He said to king Rāma: "I am the only brāhmaṇa that remains (unfed). Give food also to me who am old and weak."

77-80. Rāma too, hearing his words, said (these) words to Lakṣmaṇa: "You wash his feet. I shall worship the brāhmaṇa". The guest also spoke (these) words to Rāma who was absorbed (in the ritual): "I desire (to have) food (only) if you wash my feet. Do you insult me because (you think these) brāhmaṇas are superior to me? You do not know the method of performing a śrāddha as is practised by the great sages. If you insult me, then all brāhmaṇas are insulted. The śrāddha (would) be harmed and you will go to hell."

81-88. Then Rāma himself washed the feet of the brāhmaṇa; and having made the brāhmaṇa sip water he took him into the house. Then Rāma having sipped water, himself gave him a seat. When the brāhmaṇas were seated on their seats, he controlled his breath, and having obtained (their) consent to the performance of his rite, he would throw (i.e. he threw) water with sesamum seeds, with (the accompaniment of) the hymn *Apahata* at the region of the door. Then he should throw it at the place where the vessels for the dead ancestors are kept, with (the utterance of the hymn) *Udīratām.* Then he should throw the water with the sacred rice grains with (i.e. by reciting) the Gāyatrī (hymn) at the place where vessels for the gods are placed. Then having sprinkled the entire (food) that is cooked, he should utter this hymn. Then having thought of the place of śrāddha as Gayā, and having reflected upon Viṣṇu, so also having meditated upon the Vasus and (his) dead ancestors. he should proceed with the śrāddha Then he should offer worship to all gods with grains of barley or rice. Then he should take along with sacred rice grains, two darbhas with their roots and tips joined. Touching the ground with his right knee, he should

offer water into the hands of the brāhmaṇas. Then, he who offers the śrāddha, should offer a seat with (the utterance of these words) *Purūravārdravāṇām devānām idamāsanam*, and should request them.

89-97a. Then having made a respectful offering on the tips of the darbhas at the north, he should turn the pot making it lie with the face on the knot of the darbhas. Then he should make the vessel lie with its face upwards, and should sprinkle it with water and golden ornaments. He should put water into the pot in which the pavitra (darbhas) have been put, with (the hymn) *Śam no devyā.* He should also (recite the hymn in honour) of all gods as long as the rite enjoined by the rules goes on. He should put barley-grains into the pot to the accompaniment of the hymn *Yavosi dhānyarājo vā.* Then he should offer water-pots mixed with honey (i.e. in which honey is placed) and with sandal and flowers. Then the respectful offering should be made with the utterance of the words: 'O brāhmaṇa, this is a respectful offering to you'. Then he should ask (the brāhmaṇas): 'May I invoke the gods'. Then saying *Viśvedevāḥ* he should put the darbhas on the head of the brāhmaṇa. He should then mutter: 'The Viśvedevas listen. May they come (here).' Then having come and being seated, he should take the pot with the darbhas. Then having thrown the water from the main vessel on his right foot, he should put the water from the pot on the right hand of the brāhmaṇa in front of the pavitraka, to the accompaniment of the hymn *Yā divyā.* Then saying: 'This respectful offering to you' and collecting the water of the respectful offering in a pot, he should put that vessel containing the water used for the respectful offering somewhere.

97b-102a. Then having put water on their hands, he should worship them with barley-grains. Requesting them: 'Worship, propitiate', he, the giver of the water, having worshipped from the foot to the head, and repeating the hymn *Gandhadvāreṇa*, he should, likewise, worship the dead ancestors, with his sacred thread hanging down from his right shoulder. Then having invested a brāhmaṇa with a sacred thread, and with the darbhas with the sesamum seeds, he should, with his left knee put on the ground, offer him a seat. Then facing the south he should ask them about the appropriate moment. Then he should put the

pot in the darbhas with their tips in the southern direction, in such a way that it lies on its face. Then having been tied with three darbhas he should make it lie with its face upwards.

102b-105a. Then having sprinkled (water) into the pots with two darbhas and sesamum seeds, he should put water to the accompaniment of the hymn *Śam no devyā*, and should put the sesamum seeds, uttering (the hymn) *Tilosi*. Then having offered sandal and flowers, he asks them: 'Are you satisfied with the respectful offering?' When they give the answer: 'The respectful offering (is satisfactory)' he should invoke his dead ancestors. Then, he should stand, and holding in his hand the respectful offering made of sesamum seeds, flowers and darbhas, he should offer the water of the respectful offering with the (utterance of the) hymn: *Uśantastvā*.

105b-106a. Then after that he should worship them, and should, as before, put the sacred thread so as to hang from his right shoulder. He should use a golden pot for (offerings to be made to) gods after having washed it.

106b-110a. He should use a silver pot for (oblations to be offered to) the dead ancestors, or as is available. In its absence a pot made of bell metal, not obtained from anyone else, is excellent. In its absence vessels made of palāśa leaves would be (used). But not a mediocre one. So also vessels made of leaves of plantain trees, mango trees, jambū leaves, punnāga leaves, parāka leaves, leaves of campā, madhūka, kuṭaja, so also leaves of mātuluṅga should be given by men at a śrāddha. Having brought the food in a ladle and ghee in hands, he should ask the brāhmaṇa about the spreading of the food after wearing the sacred thread over his right shoulder and under the left arm-pit. (He should say to the brāhmaṇa:)

110b-112a. 'I shall put (the oblation) into fire'. The reply (would be:) 'Do so.' Then having spread it out he should wear the sacred thread (in the usual way) and having sprinkled (water) should collect it. Saying *Somāya pitṛmate svadhā namaste* he should offer (oblation) to Soma. (He should also say:) *Yamāya pitṛmate svadhā namaḥ*.

112b-115a. Then he should offer the second oblation and then having scattered sacred rice grains (he should say:) *Agnaye*

kavyavāhanāya svadhā namaḥ. Then having offered oblation, and wearing the sacred thread over the right shoulder, he should surround the brāhmaṇas and go. Then he should repeatedly drop it into the vessels meant for the dead ancestors. Then he should wash the vessel meant for the piṇḍas and the ladle. Then he should arrange the vessels.

115b-116a. Then to the right side of the vessels he should offer food. He (i.e. Rāma) gave all (kinds of) food, edible vegetables.

116b-117. Then a very old guest, looking here and there, said to the calm Rāma: "Quickly salute me. I am hungry. I shall eat with your (i.e. after you) order."

118-121a. Rāma spoke (these) words: "O sage, wait for a moment. I shall now quickly salute the deities and the dead ancestors." Saying so Rāma offered the food in the vessels. He put the darbhas on the pavitraka meant for gods in such a way that their tips faced east and north, and those darbhas on the pavitraka (i.e. the two darbhas placed on the ground) meant for the dead ancestors in such a way that their tips faced west and south. They offer food and darbhas, barley grains and sesamum seeds looking upon them as 'the earth'.

121b-125. He should first offer that, saying *Ye devāḥ*, to the gods, which is touched by the thumb of the brāhmaṇa to the accompaniment of these words: *Idam Viṣṇuḥ*. Then he should offer it to the dead ancestors and then to the guest. Then saying *Devatābhyo* he should offer the prayer repeated before and after eating. Having muttered the Gāyatrī(-hymn) three times, and with his sacred thread over his left shoulder and under the right arm-pit, he should face the east; then wearing the sacred thread over his right shoulder and under the left arm-pit he should say, 'Hereafter (please) eat madhutraya'. When the brāhmaṇas have eaten, he should repeat a hymn that kills the demons, and should cause the food and (other) eatables to be served. I shall (now) tell in brief what great wonder that brāhmaṇa who was the guest, performed.

126-132a. With one mouthful he swallowed the entire (food) that was there in the pots; and said (to Rāma): "Give me that much food which would be enough for oblations to the vital airs. Why are you engaged in (performing) the śrāddha rite,

if you are unable to give this much? O Rāma, if you are unable to give (food) to me alone, then why are you intent upon giving to many (brāhmaṇas)? Deeds done rashly are not (properly) accomplished. All (the varieties of food) prepared by you are not enough even for making an offering to my vital airs. Tell me how you will give food to me and also to these (brāhmaṇas)." The hero Rāma said to him: "You eat according to your pleasure." Saying so, Rāma observed that very wonderful deed of him. Then calling Śambhu, he said: "You spread out (i.e. serve the food). I think that you are my father and Śivā, Pārvatī is my mother. I think Bhavānī is Annapūrṇā and the highest goddess."

132b-142. That Pārvatī said (these) words: "I shall give him sufficient (food)." Then Umā (i.e. Pārvatī) brought a bell-metal-vessel full of boiled rice and adorned. With (i.e. in) a golden ladle she brought fragrant and bright boiled rice. "Let this be inexhaustible for him", saying so she gladly gave once (only) the boiled rice on the right hand of the brāhmaṇa. He, with his head trembling, looked up. He had his hand stretched out. "Taking the boiled rice in the hand, give it to me. Is it sweet and well-cooked?" Śambhu's wife (i.e. Pārvatī) said to him: "Eat from your hand, then (only) I shall give." Then the brāhmaṇa again ate the food that was (placed) on his hand. Knowing that was inexhaustible, he stretched out the other hand. The goddess put the boiled rice on that hand. The chaste one gave the cooked, inexhaustible food to other brāhmaṇas (also). Then that brāhmaṇa, having seen that inexhaustible boiled rice on both his hands, stretched out another (i.e. a third) hand; and he said: "Give me excellent food, with soup and ghee." Then that goddess Śivā, dear to Śambhu, gave the inexhaustible (boiled rice) to him. Whatever the chaste lady gave was all inexhaustible. (But) again and again another (i.e. a new) hand was produced. Thus having produced a thousand hands he stopped. The brāhmaṇa said to her: "Give me a mouthful of water. O good lady, you have satisfied me. Neither Rāma nor Sītā has satisfied me."

Śambhu said:

143. Now Rāma has given you; Sītā has given you; I too

have given you. What full (food) should be given to you hereafter. Tell that to me.

The brāhmaṇa said:

144-147. I am satisfied. More should not be given to me.

As he knew that there was food on his hand, it somehow did not fall down. Seated (there) he thought a long time: 'How is it that I have (but) one hand? This is prepared for my enjoyment, and not for any other act of mine. Therefore, all this of another's activity will be empty.' Determining like this with his mind, the guest besmeared his body with (the food). That wonder took place when all gods were watching. Knowing that the brāhmaṇas were pleased, Rāma who knew the highest truth and who had a ladle in his hand, duly asked them: "Are you satisfied?'

148-153. The excellent brāhmaṇas (said:) "We are satisfied." He should, having scattered the food to the accompaniment of hymns, and facing the south, place the piṇḍa near the vessel. There only he should give mouthful (of water) to the brāhmaṇas. They threw their mouthfuls into the vessels of leaves in which remnants (of the food) were kept. Those brāhmaṇas entered the house without the guest. The guest said: "O king, I shall sip the water outside (only). O Rāma, I cannot get up. Give me your hand." Then Rāma gave his hand. (But) the best brāhmaṇa did not get up. Then Hanūmat also gave him his strong hand. Then taking the best brāhmaṇa with his other hand, the lord of the monkeys dragged him. The brāhmaṇa said with a loud cry:

The brāhmaṇa said:

154-160. Oh, clearly my hand is being cut off. Lift me by holding at any other (place) than that.

Then he (i.e. Hanūmat) covered (i.e. tied) his back up to his head with his tail, and forcibly ran over the ground. But the brāhmaṇa did not move. Then the brave monkey, cutting the ground with his feet, put both his feet on his head. The house became shattered; (and) all the brāhmaṇas stood outside. Then that Hanūmat came out along with that old brāhmaṇa. He put that old brāhmaṇa on a seat. Bringing water for the brāhmaṇa

in an earthern pot, Jāmbavat said (to him): "O brāhmaṇa, you should take clean water along with the pot. Sītā would wash the body, and Lakṣmaṇa will give (i.e. pour) water." Then Jāmbavat told Rāma all that the brāhmaṇa had said. Rāma ordered his younger brother and his wife to wash (the body of) the brāhmaṇa. Then Lakṣmaṇa brought water to wash the brāhmaṇa's body.

161-165. Then the king washed his entire body as he would wash an image. Then by Rāma's advice the two (i.e. Lakṣmaṇa and Sītā) did just like that. Then the guest threw his mouthful on the face of Sītā. She, having ornaments (on her person) was covered with water. Then that chaste lady cleaned the brāhmaṇa's face full of phlegm and saliva. Again she washed, and his nose gave out phlegm. Then having made the brāhmaṇa sip water, Lakṣmaṇa said to him, "Get up". The brāhmaṇa said: "It is not possible." Then Hanūmat also came (there). The guest said to him: "I, a brāhmaṇa guest, am troubled by Hanūmat. Some time back while lifting me, the monkey dropped me down."

166-170. Then Jāmbavat said to him: "My body is soft like the down. I shall hold you. O brāhmaṇa, you will not have any harm." Saying so, Jāmbavat lifted the brāhmaṇa after supporting him with both his arms. Bringing him to the verge of the place occupied by the brāhmaṇas, he put down the sage. Then Rāma went round the best brāhmaṇas keeping them to his right. Blessed by the excellent brāhmaṇas he gave them tāmbūla and saluting, along with his brothers their feet, said: "O Sītā, you have not washed the feet of this guest. There is dirt at the couple of shanks of him. His face also is full of dirt. Wash his face properly. The brāhmaṇa cannot stand dirt."

Sītā said:

171a. It was properly washed. (The dirt) has again come out.

Rāma said:

171b-174. Again wash off the dirt. Otherwise it would be my fault.

Then Sītā, having done like that, remained silent. That brāhmaṇa, highly enraged, said to Rāma and Sītā: "O best

king, Sītā should support my feet, you should support my hands, and let Bharata fan me. Let Lakṣmaṇa dress the multitude of (i.e. my profuse) hair. Let Śatrughna remove (i.e. cleanse) the phlegm on my body with his own garment."

Sūta said:

175-182a. Then they did all that in the case of the guest as was told by him. The brāhmaṇas, men, monkeys and demons were amazed. Goddess Pārvatī and Śambhu looked at him with the knitting of their eyebrows (i.e. with frowns). Then the guest and Śambhu spoke mentally. The guest holding a conch, a disc, a mace, wearing a yellow garment, with his entire body adorned and very bright, was pleased. That Śambhu who had three eyes, who resembled pure crystal, who was adorned with all ornaments, who was (bright) like a crore of suns, who had put on a crown, who was the treasure of compassion, and who was formerly propitiated, became pleased. Sadāśiva holding the hand of the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) got up. Rāma who was very righteous, and whose body was horripilated, and whose eyes were full of joy, fell (i.e. prostrated) on the ground like a staff. His brothers, lying on the ground like staffs, saluted him (i.e. Śiva). Śiva, having raised Rāma, embraced him, smelt his head and spoke sweet words to Rāma having lotus-like eyes.

Śiva said:

182b-183a. I am pleased, ask for a boon which is difficult to be had even by Brahmā and others. I have nothing to receive from you. You ask for a boon. Do not delay.

Śrī Rāma said:

183b-187a. O lord of the worlds, I have nothing to ask for. Now I have (in my possession) the kingdom of the earth. Heaven is secured through (one's) deeds. I have devotion through seeing your feet. I am enjoying good health, (as) you see. That Sītā (my wife) is the best among women. I have subjugated all kings. My subjects are endowed with righteousness. O you imperishable one, due to your arrival I am glad. Yet I shall ask for something. Let my devotion for you be stable. So also, O god,

O lord, stay in my house for three years in this form and expounding all duties.

Śiva said:

187b-192. Let it be so, O Rāma. Everything will be possible for you.

Then the disc-holder (i.e. Viṣṇu) said to the lotus-eyed Rāma: "O noble one, ask for the boon that you desire. I am pleased with you." Śrī Rāma said (these) words: "I have nothing to be solicited. Whatever I wanted to have, I have had it from Śambhu. All else has (already) been said. Yet, O Viṣṇu, I ask for one (thing). Always be pleased (with me)." Then Viṣṇu said to Sītā: "I am now pleased with you. Ask for a boon. I shall grant it." Then Sītā said (these) words: "Before (some) time my husband has asked for a boon. I have no other boon (to seek from you). If you willingly grant (one), then let my mind (always) turn away from another man (than my husband). O brāhmaṇa, O lord, my salutation to you."

193-197. Then all the sages saluted the two excellent deities. He then said to Rāma: "(Now), eat along with your brothers. With the goddess (Pārvatī) I shall stay in your charming, secluded mansion. Let Viṣṇu who does all things, and who is accompanied by the daughter of the ocean (i.e. Lakṣmī), stay in one mansion, O Rāma, for he is very greedy." Then the revered sage Vasiṣṭha sat in front of the two in a clean, great house, rich with seats and containing many vessels. Other sages and kings also sat according to their (seniority in) ages. Then king Rāma, along with his brothers, made them sit on a soft, even seat.

198-205a. Rāma, comforting his servants led by Hanūmat, said: "You should stand round about. I shall eat afterwards. (This will not be) in a different manner." Then they all gave them respectful offerings one by one. All those who were Rāma's attendants, also ate (food). Giving them tāmbūla etc. (Rāma) fed the chief monkeys and others. Then the lotus-eyed Rāma, after they all had eaten (food), gave food to the helpless, the blind, the poor so also to the beasts, birds and animals, and started offering the sandhyā (prayer). Then the king offered his sandhyā (prayer) and muttered (the hymns), and having saluted

them occupied the throne. That Rāma, the descendent of Raghu, being waited upon by the citizens and inhabitants of the country, shone, when in the assembly, as god (Indra), the lord of Śacī, surrounded by all gods. He executed all the work of (the administration of) the kingdom along with his brothers; (then) Rāma, (calling) each one by his name gave leave to all. He also dismissed his brothers and other monkeys.

205b-207. Then the very lustrous Vasiṣṭha said (these) words to Rāma: "O Rāma, do not forget the duty that you have to perform in the morning. The venerable lord of Ambikā, the lord of the worlds, Śambhu is seated there. The glorious one should be diligently remembered and saluted." Saying, "All right", the king (i.e. Rāma) saluted his preceptor, and gave him leave; and thinking of the lord of lords, he resorted to his wife.

The sages said:

208. O preceptor, tell us what Rāma, the best among the intelligent, did after having got up in the morning. We have a curiosity to listen to it.

Sūta said:

209. Then seeing Śambhu, Rāma said to him: "(Please) narrate the tale of Śaṅkara. O best sage, I am not (fully) satisfied with (the account of) the greatness of Śiva, which destroys the stream of sins, (though) I have been hearing it."

Śambhu said:

210-217. Now I shall tell you the reply given by the lord to the remaining question. Those who wait upon the deity with materials procured unjustly, become deformed, as (for example) a demon, named Rūpaka, propitiated Śaṅkara with wealth earned unjustly. He made a bell to please the lord by (spending) that wealth only. His son was known as Sampāti. He worshipped Śaṅkara with wealth earned unjustly. Both of them died one day. They went to Śiva's heaven. Vīrabhadra spoke to them: "O Rūpaka, you offered worship with wealth that was unjustly earned; you also made a bell etc. Due to that conduct you will be deformed and will be (born as) a thief. Clearly due to

not listening to the uttarance of Śiva's name, his ears would perish due to the sound (of the name) and he would not see (the lord). By this much, O lord, you have properly offered the worship. Therefore, you will have properly offered the worship. Therefore, you will have devotion". Thus Vīrabhadra directed the attendant named Anaśana, wandering somewhere. The two, who were reduced to that state, stayed in Śiva's heaven.

Śambhu said:

218-223. I shall now tell (you) the story about the impaired materials of worship which the great lord told Hanūmat: O Rāma, listen to the account of each of the goblin-attendants of Śiva. I shall also tell you (about) the ripening of actions.

Śiva who was asked by Hanūmat to narrate (the account of) the attendants with impaired bodies said: "Listen to what is said about him who is a knower, and who will knowingly offer impaired materials to the lord: He has perspiration on his entire body; for all the time he has perspiration on his body; his garments are wet due to perspiration; his body has a small stream brought about by perspiration; drops of perspiration fall from the tip of his nose. He is seen to be unfit for touch. Formerly, he, while perspiring, propitiated the lord. I shall tell you a historical account about this:

224-230a. There was a brāhmaṇa peasant named Cekitāna. Everyday he had agricultural produce after having bathed in the morning. When the time of mid-day came, the brāhmaṇa muttered (a hymn). He then said to his wife: 'Quickly bring me food.' With the food she brought, he who always perspired and who was tormented by the sun, speedily worshipped Śiva with sandal, flowers, sacred rice grains full of (his) perspiration. When the evening came, he, with his body washed and looking very handsome, worshipped the lord of gods with means (i.e. materials) available in the season. The very intelligent one died and went to Śiva's heaven. Vīrabhadra also said to him: 'Be Śiva's attendant (named) Svedila. Formerly you worshipped Śambhu with materials touched by your perspiration. You were always full of perspiration. Therefore, you become the attendant (called) Svedila.' "

Śambhu said:

230b-231. O Rāma, thus ordered by Vīra (i.e. Vīrabhadra) he became an attendant. O noble one, see this Ghaṇṭāmukha. He was a vaiśya named Vibhāvasu in his former existence. He was pious. He was a great donor. Everyday he fed brāhmaṇas. He practised religious rites. In the morning he saluted and worshipped Śiva with flowers. He smeared a small (portion of the ground) with cowdung; and having worshipped the lord and offered him a lotus etc. he sounded his impaired bell.

Rāma said:

232. How (i.e. due to what) was his bell impaired?

Śambhu said:

233-236. Formerly there was a stout (person) known as Soma. His son, called Manda, was ten years old. He had put kulmāṣa grains cooked in fire into a bell, O king; and he had eaten them. Therefore, it had become impaired. Trying to seize that vaiśya he said these (words). The vaiśya himself cleaned (other) materials but (not) the bell. Due to his using it (without cleaning it) he contracted sin, and so became the attendant Ghaṇṭāmukha.

Rāma said:

237. When the materials of worship were purified, it was also purified. Then how could it cause sin? It is properly said that the purifier of materials is for purifying the materials(?).

Śambhu said:

238. In the ordinary parlance there will be none who will not be devoted to you. He will go to Śiva's place. The narrator also would be like that.

Sūta said:

239-242. He who narrates this story, will be like him on the earth. This most secret (account) would give the knowledge about Śiva. O brāhmaṇas, I have told you this great (account) helping (you) to lead an auspicious life. He who listens to it

devoutly, is honoured in Śiva's heaven. To the reader of the Purāṇa one should give a garment, a cow, golden ornaments, fertile land according to one's capacity. He who recites or listens to this dialogue between Śiva and Rāghava destroying the entire stream of sins, goes to the highest place.